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# William Shakespeare: His changing dramaturgy in the late plays.

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# WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:

# HIS CHANGING DRAMATURGY IN THE LATE PLAYS

BY

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ABSTRACT

In the summer of 1608, Shakespeare, along with other members of the King's Men Company, became shareholders of the private, indoor theatre of Blackfriars. The theatre had been re-built in 1596 by James Burbage in the old Blackfriars priory and the theatre had developed in a tradition of boy-chorister drama.

Thus, after 1608 the King's Men performed regularly in their Globe open-air playhouse in the summer months and moved into the fashionable, indoor theatre for winter performances.

Coincidental with the entry of the King's Men into Blackfriars, Shakespeare began the so-called, fourth writing phase of his career when he wrote Pericles, Cymbeline, Winter's Tale, and The Tempest for the King's Men.

The four plays demonstrate similarities of theme, structure, and resolution, and are usually labelled Tragi-comedies. The plays also contain characteristics which set them apart, as a group, from the rest of Shakespeare's canon.

It has repeatedly been questioned by students of Elizabethan-Jacobean drama whether the indoor atmospheric Blackfriars influenced Shakespeare as a dramatist, for the four plays demonstrate considerable consistency with

performing traditions of Blackfriars.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the historical traditions and characteristics of the Blackfriar theatre and to evaluate some characteristics of Shakespeare's four late plays in the light of these traditions. Also included in this paper is a discussion of the changing theatrical conditions in Jacobean London after the accession of James to the throne and the effect of these conditions upon playwrights, including Shakespeare.

# PREFACE

Shakespearean scholarship and criticism in the Twentieth century have been characterized, in part, by an interest in the working conditions of the Shakespearean stage. At the mid-point of this century Allardyce Nicoll wrote:

> . . . only within the present century have we approached within measurable distance of an understanding of the methods employed in the original production of Elizabethan plays or endeavoured to set these plays, in our imagination, firmly against the background of their theatrical environment. No other field of investigation more characteristically belongs to our own age than this.[1]

Extensive and detailed studies concerning the Shakespearean stage have been published since the beginning of this century. However, there has been a renascent scholarly interest in the working conditions of the Elizabethan-Jacobean playhouses which extends back approximately to the date of Professor Nicoll's article. This renascent study of Shakespearean staging methods, in the midst of which this thesis is written,[2] involves

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1 "Studies In The Elizabethan Stage Since 1900," Shakespeare Survey I (1948), 2.

2 Evidence of current interest in Shakespearean staging methods is readily apparent. For example, Glynne Wickham's three-volume Early English Stages (London, 1959, 1963. Volume 2 is as yet unpublished) provides the results of intensive added research into Elizabethan-Jacobean-Caroline staging methods based upon performing traditions

a dual approach to the subject: It includes, first, a re-examination of the characteristics of the Globe Theatre, the outdoor public playhouse of Shakespeare's company and, second, a re-evaluation of the characteristics of the private indoor playhouse of the King's Men, the Blackfriars Theatre.

As nearly as possible, I have confined this essay primarily to the period 1608-1612--from the time when the King's Men assumed their Blackfriars' lease until the date of Shakespeare's final acknowledged dramatic writing. As well, this essay includes discussions of

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of those and earlier periods. Professor Wickham writes of his research, "Such information as the following chapters provide which may have the air of novelty about it results directly from examining the data presented by others in a wider context than they themselves chose to do". II, 156.

Richard Southern in "Current Controversies about the Elizabethan Stage", World Theatre XIII (Summer, 1964), 74, emphasizes that the state of our knowledge today of the architecture of the Elizabethan Stage "is characterized by some slight and comparatively genial controversy over a number of minor points.... But our argument arises over the stage and especially over our uncertainty how far we can trust the famous De Witt drawing and what it says about the stage".

But perhaps the most exciting evidence of this renascent interest in Elizabethan staging methods is provided by the increasing activities of Shakespearean festivals on this continent, accompanied by a corresponding building of open-stage theatres in attempts to simulate Elizabethan performing conventions. The first theatre to be opened in New York City in nearly forty years, the ANTA-Washington Square theatre which opened in January, 1964, features an open stage. Rosamond Gilder points out that the decision to include such a stage design in the New York theatre was "thanks to the powerful and flexible tool" of Shakespeare's dramas. See "Credit it to Shakespeare", World Theatre XIII (Summer, 1964), 88.

Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest, which are generally considered as a group in discussions of Shakespeare's final plays.

I wish to extend my gratitude to Dr. John F. Sullivan of the English Department of the University of Windsor for his encouragement, guidance, and advice in the compilation of this thesis; to my wife, Yvonna, and to my sister, Anne Zeleney, who so painstakingly prepared working drafts of this thesis as well as the final copy; to Mr. John Lumby, photography director of CFQC-TV, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, who reproduced the photographic copy contained herein.

Of considerable help to me in the preparation of the concluding chapter in this thesis was Dr. John McCabe's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Birmingham, 1954, "A Study of the Blackfriars Theatre 1608-1642". This dissertation was suggested to me by Dr. John F. Sullivan and by Dr. G. B. Harrison of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. McCabe of New York University was exceedingly kind in responding to my inquiry about his dissertation and forwarded to me his personal copy. To him I owe a particular debt of gratitude.

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# CHAPTER I

## SHAKESPEARE: HIS CHANGING DRAMATURGY

## AN INTRODUCTION

From an examination of Shakespeare's plays it quickly becomes apparent not only that he was a poet-playwright, but that he was, as well, a superb stage craftsman. His plays abound in visual images which imprint on the mind's eye of the viewer the background sets for his scenes. He establishes the times, places, and moods of his plays not by scenic devices but by placing appropriate words in the mouths of his actors. Similarly he reconstructs battle-fields and moves armies. Within the time required for his actors to speak and enact approximately one hundred and fifty lines he carries his stage action from Pompey's galley off Misenum to a plain in Syria, to Rome, to Alexandria, to Athens, in swift sequences, unhindered by cumbersome scenery. Yet he is ever aware of the practical considerations of his craft: His plays move uninterruptedly while he allows his actors time for off-stage needs such as preparations for entrances or costume changes from street dress to armour. And he performs these dramaturgical effects without the benefit of stage devices we take for granted in our theatres. When we appreciate such scenic and technical effectiveness we

can then reconcile Shakespeare's manner of writing with the essentially bare-stage conventions of Elizabethan public playhouses.

These bare-stage conventions we can determine readily by tracing the development of the Elizabethan stage from the medieval pageant wagon, the inn courtyard or from the banqueting hall of a castle or manor house; but, up to and including the time that Shakespeare was writing his most polished plays, concurrent experiments in play production with an abundance of naturalistic settings were establishing a new mode of staging plays in England, notably in courtly entertainments.[1]

Since Shakespeare was not only a poet-dramatist-actor but also a part owner of a theatre (and by 1608 part shareholder of titles to two theatres), it is reasonable to assume that he was aware of changing theatrical conventions and conditions and that he was ready to adapt to his own use any development which could contribute beneficially to his career.

The purpose of this thesis, then, is to examine those conditions which could have exerted an influence on Shakespeare and to determine to what extent Shakespeare as a dramatist was affected in his later plays by those changing theatrical conditions.

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1 See Allardyce Nicoll, Stuart Masques and The Rennaissance Stage (New York, 1938), pp. 39-40.

In the discussion that follows, frequently-occurring terms are "public" and "private", terms used to distinguish between the two types of theatres for which Shakespeare wrote.

The public theatre was that which was open to the sky with a stage placed in an open yard and surrounded on three sides by a standing audience in the yard, with tiered seating of two or three rows inside the outer confines of the building. Occasionally some of these public playhouses doubled as bear-baiting arenas, circus amphitheatres, and prize-fight houses.[2] The private theatre was that which was totally housed inside a building, with seating accommodation on the ground floor area as well as in tiered galleries. This theatre was artificially lighted, and attracted an audience which Professor Alfred Harbage chooses to call a "coterie" audience as distinct from an audience made up of the "general" public.[3]

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2 See Ashley Thorndike, Shakespeare's Theater (New York, 1928), p. 50.

3 "The distinction," Professor Harbage says, "between the audiences of the two kinds of theatres is not a distinction between plebeians and patricians, but between a general public and a coterie. The milieu of the private playhouse was not 'lordly'." (Shakespeare And The Rival Traditions [New York, 1952], p. 55).

The Blackfriars theatre, insofar as accommodating an audience, was as 'public' as the Globe; it was 'private' only in the sense that privacy was obtained for its better-class patrons by a higher admission price.

The designation of Blackfriars as a 'private' house is explained by W. J. Lawrence: The Common Council Act of 1575 which regulated 'commercial' performances in the City of London was circumvented by Richard Farrant when

The private theatre on which this discussion will centre is that one known as the Second Blackfriars. The Burbages with Shakespeare and other members of the King's Company assumed a lease on the Blackfriars theatre in August of 1608, and thereafter performed plays at their Globe Theatre during the summer months and at the Blackfriars during the winter season.[4] Chapter II of this essay includes further discussion of the background of the entry of Shakespeare and his company into the Blackfriars Theatre.

Such a change from an outdoor theatre to an indoor theatre would inevitably cause playwrights to adapt their plays to suit the changed conditions. I believe that Shakespeare's late plays demonstrate recognizable differences from his earlier plays and that these differences were brought about as result of that changed physical theatrical environment. In order to consider the plays

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he took over a portion of the Blackfriars priory in 1576 as a rehearsal-playhouse for boys companies. At the time, Farrant was master of the Children of Windsor and deputy-master of the Children of the Chapel. As for the charging of admission prices at the theatre, the Blackfriars priory had been earlier designated as a Liberty and assumed not to be under the jurisdiction of the Common Council. (See "New Facts about Blackfriars" in The Elizabethan Playhouse and Other Studies New York, 1913 , pp. 227-28.)

4 See E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford, 1923), II, 510. To distinguish the Blackfriars shareholders from those who shared in the acting profits of the King's Company, Professor Chambers labels the new Blackfriars tenants "householders." These were: Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, Shakespeare, John Heminges, Henry Condell, William Sly, and Thomas Evans.

in a performing environment, the study of mise-en-scène of the four plays becomes part of the method of examination in this thesis.

A variety of subjective explanations are offered by critics of the stylistic and thematic changes in his plays which Shakespeare demonstrated throughout his career as a dramatist. When the later plays, Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest, as a group, are distinguished from the earlier plays, the tendency on the part of critics is, as Gerald Eades Bentley states,

> . . . to turn to Shakespeare's sources, or to his inspirations, or to his personal affairs, or to the bucolic environment of his Stratford retirement, but not to the theatre which was his daily preoccupation for more than twenty years.[5]

Although critics may vary in their analyses of Shakespeare's later plays, there are those who acknowledge that

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5 "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars Theatre," Shakespeare Survey, I (1948), 48.

A theory developed by Dr. G. B. Harrison in private conversation with the chairman of my thesis committee, Dr. John F. Sullivan, and reported by him to me suggests a different approach to the problem of diagnosing Shakespeare's four traditional writing phases. Dr. Harrison's theory points out that Shakespeare's second, third, and fourth writing phases were preceded by periods of epidemics of the plague in London when legal restraints were placed on play performances. Dr. Harrison's historical approach, then, takes on validity because it implies a period of rest for Shakespeare with an opportunity for him to evaluate the activities of his profession, its needs, its preferences, and its trends.

Plague records for London indicate that the following years were plague years when official restraint was placed upon play performances: 1593, 1603-4, 1606-7, 1608-9. (See E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, IV, 346).

> . . . perhaps such a smaller theatre as Blackfriars roofed, artificially illuminated, and with a tradition of courtly audience exerted an influence on Shakespeare's late plays.[6]

Other critics are more positive in their assessments of Shakespeare's probable attitude towards the performing conditions of the Blackfriars theatre:

> Shakespeare, with the opportunism that always marked his stage career, could not possibly have remained indifferent to the change.[7]

As well there were other influences at work which, I believe, caused Shakespeare to write differently for his company following their 1608 decision to perform regularly in the Blackfriars Theatre. For example, the influence upon Shakespeare of a kingdom changing hands was a profound one. The results of the changeover from the adventurous, romantic era over which Elizabeth had reigned to the reign of James I are recorded as being severe. Dr. G. B. Harrison notes that there was

> rapidly a noticeable falling off in the general discipline of the State. . . . The dignified court life under Queen Elizabeth soon vanished, and fashionable manners rapidly degenerated.[8]

In an age when theatrical performances often included contemporary social comment and offered, as well, a daily

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6 Sylvan Barnet, "Shakespeare: Prefatory Remarks," in Tragedy of King Lear (New York, 1963), p. xvi.

7 E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's Last Plays (London, 1951), p. 4 (emphasis mine).

8 "The National Background," in A Companion To Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 183.

meeting place for the exchange of news and gossip, it was "inevitable that the changing society was soon to be reflected on the stage."[9] It was inevitable, as well, that Shakespeare's part in reflecting his changing society would be a very active one, since shortly after his accession, James undertook to extend his patronage to the active, dramatic companies of his day. Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Players, which had existed "only by favour of the Queen.",[10] became the King's Men, the leading company in the realm by Regal preference.

When the King's Men moved into the Blackfriars Theatre for their winter season performances they did so with five years of closer association with the court than they had been hitherto permitted.[11] From this closer association with the court of James, Shakespeare and the King's Men were exposed to court performances at a time (1604/5) when Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones were starting their highly successful collaborative careers as producers of court masques. The influences of such courtly

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9 Joseph Quincy Adams, A Life of William Shakespeare (New York, 1923), p. 412.

10 G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare the Complete Works (New York, 1948), p. 46.

11 Ibid., p. 47. "In the last four years of Queen Elizabeth's reign the Chamberlain's Men played at court fourteen times: in the first four years of the new reign they played forty-one times" (emphasis mine).

performances upon Shakespeare are discussed in the fourth chapter of this essay.

The rising popularity of playwrights such as Beaumont and Fletcher, who offered dramatic fare to satisfy sophisticated tastes, undoubtedly would have created an awareness in Shakespeare that a new playwriting style was in vogue. Whether or not Shakespeare emulated the successful pattern of the plays of the younger playwrights[12] is a moot point and not in the scope of this paper. When he discusses the contention that Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster caused Shakespeare to imitate it in Cymbeline, Gerald E. Bentley says that the important point is not the priority of either play:

> The significant and revealing facts are that both were written for the King's company; both were written . . . and both were prepared to be acted in the private theatre at Blackfriars before the sophisticated audience attracted to that house. It is their common purpose and environment, not imitation of one by the other, which makes them similar.[13]

In summary, the sequence of events of the first decade in the seventeenth century would have had a profound

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12 See Allardyce Nicoll, British Drama (New York, 1925), p. 135. "Shakespeare himself, however, was unquestionably influenced by Beaumont and Fletcher," Professor Nicoll asserts, "producing in The Tragedie of Cymbeline (c. 1609) . . . The Winter's Tale (c. 1610) . . . The Tempest (1611) . . . and Pericles, Prince of Tyre (c. 1608) . . . works of a distinctly Beaumont and Fletcher cast."

13 Bentley, p. 48

effect on Shakespeare. He had emerged from the period in his life when he had written his greatest tragedies, to an awareness that "the age of Elizabeth was no more."[14] When Shakespeare turned to the new genre of romance and tragi-comedy he "merely followed the trend of the day, yielding, as a successful playwright must, to changes imposed by altering conditions."[15]

Publications in the field of Elizabethan-Jacobean theatre have been extensive and any attempt at a proper summary lies beyond the scope of this paper. The ensuing discussion in this chapter is an enumeration of that material which has served me as a background to this examination of Shakespeare working as a dramatist for the Blackfriars theatre.

In spite of the vast amount of published materials on the subject, E. K. Chambers' four-volume The Elizabethan Stage continues to dominate the studies of Shakespearean staging. Although Chambers discusses the history of Blackfriars as well as the physical structure of the monastery in minute detail he admits that ". . . the period during which this was the principal house of the King's company lies outside the scope of this survey."[16] However, upon reviewing Chapter XXI. of The Elizabethan Stage, I was

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14 J. Q. Adams, p. 411.

15 Ibid.

16 Chambers, III, 554.

provided with incentive to follow my examination of the possible effects of the Blackfriars theatre upon Shakespeare as a dramatist. Chambers states that after considering early seventeenth century plays ". . . in the mass . . . I cannot resist the feeling that the fashion of the private stage . . . was something different from the fashion of the public stage. The technique of the dramatists corresponds to the structural conditions".[17]

Similarly, the chief reference for the later history of the theatre, Gerald Eades Bentley's five-volume The Jacobean and Caroline Stage, touches only briefly upon the 1608-1612 period which is the concern of this essay: Bentley's stated purpose was "to carry on the admirable survey made by Sir Edmund Chambers in The Elizabethan Stage from 1616, his terminal date, to the closing of the theatres in 1642."[18]

In 1933, J. Isaacs made the "first attempt at a systematic outline of the problems of stage management and production in a private theatre of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period."[19] Isaac's twenty-eight page summary of his findings after an examination of nearly one hundred and fifty plays served me as a valuable guide in my

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17 Chambers, III, 152.

18 In "Preface" to The Jacobean and Caroline Stage (Oxford, 1941), I.ii.

19 J. Isaacs, Production and Stage Management at the Blackfriars Theatre (London, 1933), p. 3.

attempt to compile a list of the characteristics of a typical Blackfriars play.

Isaacs acknowledges the scholarly examinations of Elizabethan staging conditions in major works by W. W. Greg, W. J. Lawrence, and G. F. Reynolds. With such acknowledgments I concur but I would add to the list Ashley Thorndike's invaluable text Shakespeare's Theater, first published in 1916.

The first volume of the Shakespeare Survey (1948) contains an essay by Allardyce Nicoll wherein he reviews studies of the Elizabethan stage since 1900.[20] In the essay Nicoll not only suggests that a channeled research into production and staging techniques is required, but,

> . . . above all, we badly need to be given the opportunity of relating theory to practice . . . and no theory can be a substitute for practical demonstration . . . . The scholars, in fact, need a stage of their own, a kind of laboratory for practical experiments.[21]

It may have been Allardyce Nicoll's essay which gave impetus to the current revival of interest in Shakespeare's stage, but there had been an earlier and similar suggestion by Harley Granville-Barker, who, in commenting upon Dr. E. K. Chambers' Elizabethan Stage, stated,

> . . . I could wish besides that for aid to such scientific research--Dr. Chambers' and much excellent work akin to it--there existed

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20 Shakespeare Survey I (1948), 1-16.

21 Ibid., p. 15.

> something like a laboratory in which theories and deductions could be put to practical test. The notion is not quite a fantastic one. . . . Dr. Chambers might have done well by hiring an inn-yard and personally exploring its theatrical possibilties.[22]

That such efforts in practical study have been made since the appearance of Nicoll's essay is evident--witness the annual Stratford, Ontario, productions under simulated Elizabethan conditions. In general concurrence with Nicoll's suggestion is Stratford's first producer, Tyron Guthrie,

> . . . I would say that a play should be produced on a stage which as nearly as possible offers the conditions which the author probably had in mind when he wrote.[23]

Not all students of Shakespeare are in agreement with Nicoll's suggestion for the study of Shakespeare, and some are outspoken in their opposition. In his book, Wheel of Fire, G. Wilson Knight says,

> . . . my experience . . . leaves me uncompromising in my assertion that the literary analysis of great drama in terms of theatrical technique accomplishes singularly little.

It is necessary, Professor Knight asserts, to "write of Shakespeare . . . as a philosophic poet rather than a man of the stage."[24]

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22 "A Note Upon Chapters XX. and XXI. of The Elizabethan Stage," RES I (January, 1925), 71.

23 Tyrone Guthrie, "Arguments for the Open Stage," World Theatre XIII (1964), 83. Sincere in his conviction, Guthrie last year opened a community theatre in Minneapolis designed to include a permanent open stage.

24 Wheel of Fire (London, 1949), p. vi.

However, earlier considerations than Knight's indicated an awareness of the necessity to study Shakespeare the playwright in his natural environment of the theatre. In papers prepared for the Shakespeare Association, G. B. Harrison has cautioned that, "in the past scholars have been prone to regard Shakespeare as a bookish man who drew much of his inspiration from literature,"[25] and C. M. Haines stated, "It is difficult to separate Shakespeare's stagecraft from the rest of his dramatic art."[26]

In that same issue of the Shakespeare Survey in which Nicoll urges investigations of Elizabethan stage techniques is an essay by Gerald Eades Bentley which strikes at what I have attempted to make the heart of the matter of this paper. When he discusses Shakespeare as a dramatist for the private theatre as well as for the public playhouses, Bentley states,

> It is necessary at the outset in a discussion of this sort to place Shakespeare in what seems to me his proper context--a context which none but the Baconians and Oxfordians deny, but which most scholars and critics tend to ignore. That context is the London commercial theatre and the organized professional acting troupe.

Bentley continues with a note of finality,

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25 "Shakespeare's Actors," in A Series of Papers on Shakespeare and the Theatre (London, 1949), p. 87.

26 "Development of Shakespeare's Stagecraft," in A Series of Papers on Shakespeare and the Theatre (London, 1927), p. 61.

> If Shakespeare's proper context is not the London commercial theatres and the professional troupes, then evidence has no meaning, and one man's irresponsible fancies are as good as another's.[27]

It is Bentley's essay which prompted certain areas of investigation in this essay, particularly in the fourth chapter where Shakespeare's late plays are discussed against the performing traditions of the Blackfriars theatre.

Some recent publications on Shakespeare's stage have managed to be near-revolutionary in concept but hardly controversial in impact. Basing his discussions, initially, on the De Witt sketch which shows a portion of the audience seated in a balcony behind the players at a performance in the Swan theatre, Leslie Hotson states that it is his conviction that Elizabethan productions were, in fact, performed "in the round." "Once we lay preconception aside," Hotson concludes, "it is curious to see how the proof that the public stage, like that at court, was a complete circus stage, has been staring us in the face unregarded."[28] What has been more curious is the fact that Hotson's suggestion has aroused very little critical comment when in his article some very valid points have been made; in particu-

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27 Bentley, p. 40.

28 "Shakespeare's Arena," Sewanee Review LXI (1953), 349.

lar, when it is recalled that the first public theatres were intended to serve a multi-purpose function of accommodating a variety of activities, including such amphi-theatrical events as bear-baiting, tumbling and circus shows, fencing, and, eventually, prize fights.[29]

Hotson's article and his subsequent book[30] on this same thesis have not gone unanswered, however, and some of the reaction has been somewhat dampening in effect. George F. Reynolds, in discussing the open-stage type of presentation, reacts, simply, by stating ". . . the Elizabethan public stage was not an 'arena' stage, as Leslie Hotson would have us believe."[31]

In addition to the publications mentioned thus far, several more are pertinent to the topic at hand. Four books in particular, I would single out as those which I consider essential to further examination of Shakespeare's career as a dramatist for the Elizabethan-Jacobean theatre.

1. The first of these has already been mentioned: Alfred Harbage's Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions. Professor Harbage suggests that the real difference between the Elizabethan public and private theatres was that the

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29 Thorndike, p. 56.

30 Shakespeare's Wooden O (New York, 1960).

31 "The Return of the Open Stage," in Essays on Shakespearean and Elizabethan Drama (Columbia, Missouri, 1962), p. 361.

audience of the private theatre was a coterie. "These theatres catered to the few. The number and nature of these few must be our chief concern."[32]

2. Three essays and the "Reading List" contained in the volume A Companion To Shakespeare Studies served the compilation of this essay extremely well, since the topics of C. J. Sisson, Harley Granville-Barker, and G. H. Harrison are basic to any detailed examination of Shakespeare and his work. Sisson, for example, points to the court masque of James I as being influential on the writing of Shakespeare's later plays.[33] Harley Granville-Barker's statement that "we may perhaps see this 'indoor' disposition reflected in his latest plays, particularly in the dramatic repose of The Tempest"[34] offered encouragement to the thesis pursued in the fourth chapter of this essay, where Shakespeare's later plays are discussed against a background of the indoor, private theatre. G. B. Harrison's essay provided me with an essential panoramic survey of a kingdom changing hands, the national background against which Shakespeare wrote his later plays.[35]

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32 Harbage, p. 42.

33 "The Theatre and the Companies," in A Companion To Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 31.

34 "Shakespeare's Dramatic Art," in A Companion To Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 67.

35 "The National Background," in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), pp. 161-85.

3. While discussing the changing theatre of Shakespeare, M. M. Reese contributes a stimulating discussion to the examination of the Elizabethan dramatists writing for their private theatres. Of one of the effects of the indoor professional theatre upon dramatists, Reese writes, "It was a fatal moment for dramatists when they discovered that they might achieve their effects by mechanical means instead of by poetry and the sweat and gristle of dramatic construction."[36]

4. But perhaps, the most significant, recent, single contribution to the study of Elizabethan stages, their origins and developments, and their significances ought to be attributed to Glynne Wickham, head of the Department of Drama, University of Bristol. Originally intended as a single volume, the work has expanded into three volumes which trace the history of English dramaturgy

> from its beginnings to the advent of the proscenium-arched scenic theatre that became public property shortly after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660.[37]

Undoubtedly, the completing volume of Wickham's set will be of untold assistance to the kind of study requirement outlined in Nicoll's 1948 essay in the Shakespeare Survey. For Professor Wickham has combined his historical research with precisely the practical methods

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36 Shakespeare His World and His Work (London, 1953), p. 163.

37 Glynne Wickham, Early English Stages (London, 1959), I, i.

prescribed by Nicoll: he has learned, for example, from experience of producing the "Passion" and "Ressurrection" plays from the Ludus Coventriae that he was able to achieve his production with "less than fifty actors."[38] If such similar thorough treatment continues to be the manner of his third volume,[39] then, indeed, it will fill a considerable void in our understanding of production techniques for the Elizabethan-Jacobean professional theatre to which Shakespeare belonged.

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38 Wickham, I, 140.

39 Ibid., II, 323. Professor Wickham states his intention for the concluding text, "The design of these two theatres [Globe and Fortune] and of those which followed them, together with a discussion of the manner in which plays were acted in them, remain to be considered in Volume III." As valuable and informative as Professor Wickham's two volumes have been in the preparation of this essay, the third volume would have undoubtedly been of greater assistance. At this time of writing Volume III is unpublished.

## CHAPTER II

### THE KING'S MEN AND THE SECOND BLACKFRIARS

When the King's Men assumed their tenancy of Blackfriars theatre in 1608 and began their winter season of performances, likely in the Fall of 1609,[1] they were not necessarily faced with an entirely new performing tradition with which they could not competently cope. Their experience of performing plays before an indoor audience at court was extensive[2] and it is suggested that some of the players may, as well, have taken part in some of the Ben Jonson-Inigo Jones courtly masques.[3]

Further, there is some demonstrable evidence that the private playhouses at Blackfriars and Whitefriars being adaptations of rooms or halls within monasteries,

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1 Gerald Eades Bentley, "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars Theatre," Shakespeare Survey I (1948), 41. Bentley points out that, although legally the lease was effected in August of 1608, because the plague was rife in London, actual Blackfriars' performances would not have started "much before 1610."

2 See Chapter I, n. 11 (p. 7 above), for G. B. Harrison's reference to the greatly increased number of performances at court in the first four years under James.

3 Ashley Thorndike, "Influence of the Court Masques on the Drama 1608-15," PMLA XV (1900), 114. Referring to the anti-masque which made its appearance about 1608, Professor Thorndike says, "The antic dancers were almost always dancers from the public theatres. This last fact points to an interesting connection between the masque and the drama, for it establishes an a priori probability that the antic dances used in the masques would be performed again in the theatres."

they would have closely resembled similar areas and conditions prevalent in court theatres.[4]

Shakespeare, as the King's Company dramatist, likely would have had ample opportunity to witness a variety of court masque performances, and perhaps he would have been impressed by the spectacular circumstances of the productions. Allardyce Nicoll suggests that

> . . . the likelihood strengthens almost to certainty when we observe that the whole imagery of Prospero's speech, "Our revels now are ended" together with the masque from which it springs, is based on revels which had already charmed Stuart eyes at Whitehall.[5]

As well there is evidence of Shakespeare's presence at court on several more occasions, once in 1604 wearing the King's livery as an attendant groom to the Ambassador

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4 Richard Hosley states that ". . . we have no (known) pictorial source of either kind for a private playhouse. . . It is generally accepted that the form of a private playhouse originated in the Tudor Hall--a reasonable supposition in view of the fact that the Second Blackfriars and the Whitefriars were created by restoring or converting existing halls, and in view also that the hall seems to have been the lowest common denominator of indoor theatrical production before establishment of the regular playhouses." ("The Origins of the Shakespearean Playhouse," SQ XV [Winter, 1964], 38.) Alfred Harbage, tracing the development of the public and private theatres, states, "The unroofed circular pit of the typical public theatre attested its descent from the innyard, animal-baiting arena, and mere plot of ground where medieval throngs had gathered about a pageant wagon. The roofed rectangular auditorium of the typical 'private' theatre attested its descent from the banqueting halls of the wealthy or academic." (Shakespeare And the Rival Tradition [New York, 1952], p. 41).

5 Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage (New York, 1963), p. 19.

of Spain.[6]

Thus Shakespeare and his company would have felt confident of their abilities to be successful in their new surroundings. They had been artistically and financially successful at the Globe and they were popular in court circles (Court appearances under James were frequent; during 1603-16 a hundred and seventy-seven performances were given by the King's Men).[7] They would have had confidence in their combined experiences and training. In their tradition of facile theatrical know-how they would have readily adapted themselves to their indoor surroundings and converted whatever physical, conventional, or atmospheric facilities were contained in their new playhouse to maximum theatrical advantage. For them to do otherwise would have been contrary to their training, for Burbage, Armin, and the others as competent professional actors, and for Shakespeare as a thoroughly professional dramatist and actor.

Whether Shakespeare was impressed by the gaudiness and show of Inigo Jones's efforts is sheer conjecture, but as the leading playwright in the top professional company in the land, he would have been struck (as likely were his colleagues in his company) by the success of the combination of Ben Jonsons' dramatic-poetic art with a

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6 E. K. Chambers, William Shakespeare (Oxford, 1930), I, 77.

7 Ibid.

highly-developed stagecraft, and, undoubtedly, the King's Men would have become aware of the fact that such a combination, enjoying the success that it did in court, could very well enjoy a similar success elsewhere.

In 1608 James ordered the suppression of the activities of the Children of the Revels who were performing in Blackfriars because of "uncomplimentary representation" of the French Court on stage as well as a disrespectful portrayal of James himself.[8] Thus, when Richard Burbage found himself with a surrendered lease on his hands, he began to organize a partnership of those who were the current householders at the Globe, and plans were made for the King's Men to use the Blackfriars as a second playhouse. I suggest that one of the reasons which prompted formulation of those plans was that the King's

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8 See E. K. Chambers The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford, 1923), II, 53-4.

Chambers states that the offending plays were undoubtedly one of the parts of Chapman's Conspiracy and Tragedy of Byron and an unnamed play by Marston. Chambers uses the text of a letter written by the French Ambassador to the English Court, M. de la Boderie, on 29 March 1608, wherein references to the offensive scenes are made. (In Elizabethan Stage, III, 257,8, Chambers cites the letter, first printed by J. J. Jusserand in M.L.R. vi, 203, from Bibl. Nat. MS. Fr. 15984).

A second allusion to the offences which led to the dissolution of the Blackfriars Children's Company was made in a letter of 11 March 1608 to Lord Salisbury from Sir Thomas Lake. This allusion was found by Chambers and is reprinted from Jac. I, xxxi, 73, Calendar of State Papers: Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and James I, edited by R. Lemon, 1856-72.

Men, after viewing the success of Inigo Jones and Ben Jonson at Court, recognized that there was an audience in London which would attend entertainments fashioned after courtly styles.

When the King's Men ventured into the Blackfriars investment they would have had a coterie audience in mind; but if they were to please that audience, then it would be necessary to supply them with dramatic fare they would pay well to see. Therefore, why not imitate Success? Who was better equipped to succeed than that talented group comprising the King's Men, with their popular playwright, and the likes of Richard Burbage to perform their lead roles? What company could better attract an audience than that one which bore the King's stamp of approval?

What went through the minds of the members of the King's company is fanciful guesswork; but it is certain that a major investment such as Blackfriars would not have been undertaken by this group of successful, practical, theatre-wise veterans if their chances of success had not been apparent to them; and it is safe to assume that a great many considerations entered into their planning.[9]

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9 Much of my discussion here of the King's Men and their taking over the Blackfriars Theatre for the winter playhouse is an extension of a notion supplied by Gerald Bentley who suggests that "We can be sure that

Did this venture in Blackfriars involve simply another theatre in which to perform their plays when weather conditions forced the closing of the Globe? Or was there a new theatrical tradition to venture into which would allow them to build upon the experience and knowledge of their many years of performing both at the Globe and at court? I believe that the King's Men entered the Blackfriars as the first, professional, adult company of players in London in the full knowledge of their beginning a new theatrical tradition, performing, full-time, in professional repertoire in an indoor theatre situated in the heart of the coterie audience for whom they hoped to perform successfully and profitably.

Since the professional travelling player of the earlier sixteenth century was malleable enough to perform on a street corner, in the court-yard of an inn, in the dining-hall of a noble or in the presence of a King, there is no doubt that the King's Men were aware of these performing traditions and that they felt professionally competent in their ability to adapt them-

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active planning for performances at the Blackfriars did get under way when Burbage, who was both the leading actor of the King's Men and owner of the Blackfriars Theatre, knew for certain that the boy actors would give up their lease and that arrangements for a syndicate of King's Men to take over the theatre could be made . . . . Conferences among these men . . . and probably preliminary financial arrangements would have been going on before a scrivener was called in to draw up a rough draft of the lease." See Bentley, p. 42.

selves to these new circumstances, to produce successfully on the basis of their extensive backgrounds and on the strength and popularity of their leading playwright.[10]

Alfred Harbage points out that when James Burbage built the second Blackfriars in 1596 he

> intended it certainly for Shakespeare's company. It was a move toward taking the drama indoors, toward imitating the methods of the theatre of a coterie, and must mean that the Burbages had seen omens in the sky.[11]

During the tenure by the King's Men, the Blackfriars was to become the most eminent of the private theatres in London. And, as an indoor theatre with characteristics somewhat different to the Globe, it was, as well, soon to claim for itself a central place in the development of the Elizabethan-Jacobean stage.[12]

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10 Bentley emphasizes the professional experience and competency of the King's Men and that the "most elementary theatrical foresight demanded that in 1608 they prepare new and different plays for a new and different theatre and audience. Shakespeare was their loved and trusted fellow. How could they fail to ask him for new Blackfriars' plays, and how could he fail them? All the facts at our command seem to me to demonstrate that he did not fail them. He turned from his old and tested methods and produced a new kind of play for the new theatre and audience. Somewhat unsurely at first he wrote Cymbeline for them, then, with greater dexterity in his new medium, The Winter's Tale, and finally triumphant in his old mastery, The Tempest." See Bentley, p. 49.

11 Harbage, p. 27.

12 See William A. Armstrong, "The Elizabethan Private Theatres Facts and Problems", The Society for Theatre Research, Pamphlet Series, VI (1957-58), 17.

## CHAPTER III

## BLACKFRIARS THEATRE CHARACTERISTICS

### The Blackfriars Interior

An examination of the Blackfriars Theatre reveals that there were several characteristics of the building which the King's Men would recognize as being considerably different from their Globe theatre. For one thing, the enclosed interior of the Blackfriars was a smaller total area than that of the Globe: Seating capacity for the Blackfriars has been estimated at 600 to 700 persons while the Globe is estimated to have accommodated 2050 spectators.[1] It appears that the two stages did not vary nearly as much in size, however. William A. Armstrong indicates that the Globe stage measured about 41' x 29'.[2] In a conjectural plan of the Blackfriars, Charles William Wallace shows a stage measurement of 46' x 25', although approximately one-third of the width

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1 M. M. Reese, Shakespeare His World and His Work (London, 1953), p. 161. Also see Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare And The Rival Traditions (New York, 1952), p.340. Basing his calculations on the possibility of a third seating gallery, Alfred Harbage estimates that the Blackfriars auditorium could have accommodated 955 persons. But, reducing the number of galleries to "the more probable two give us . . . a capacity of 696."

2 William A. Armstrong, "The Elizabethan Private Theatres Facts and Problems", The Society for Theatre Research Pamphlet Series, VI (1957-58), 5.

is shown as accommodating "stools for Gallants."[3]

In basic structure, there is generally believed to be little difference between the stages of Blackfriars and the Globe because many of the King's Men Blackfriars plays were also performed at the Globe.[4] When James Burbage built the Blackfriars in 1596, Alfred Harbage notes, 600 were spent for the premises and 300 were spent for alterations.[5] It is entirely likely that the elder Burbage might have made an effort to duplicate or improve upon those Globe features which had proven themselves worthy. For example, William Armstrong indicates that from Blackfriars' plays' stage directions it is "Tolerably certain that on the same level as the platform there were an inner stage and two stage doors, as in most of the public theatres."[6] The Farrar conjectural sketch of the Blackfriars bears out the probable accuracy of the above comparison.

However, there was an essential difference between the stages of the Globe and of the Blackfriars theatres

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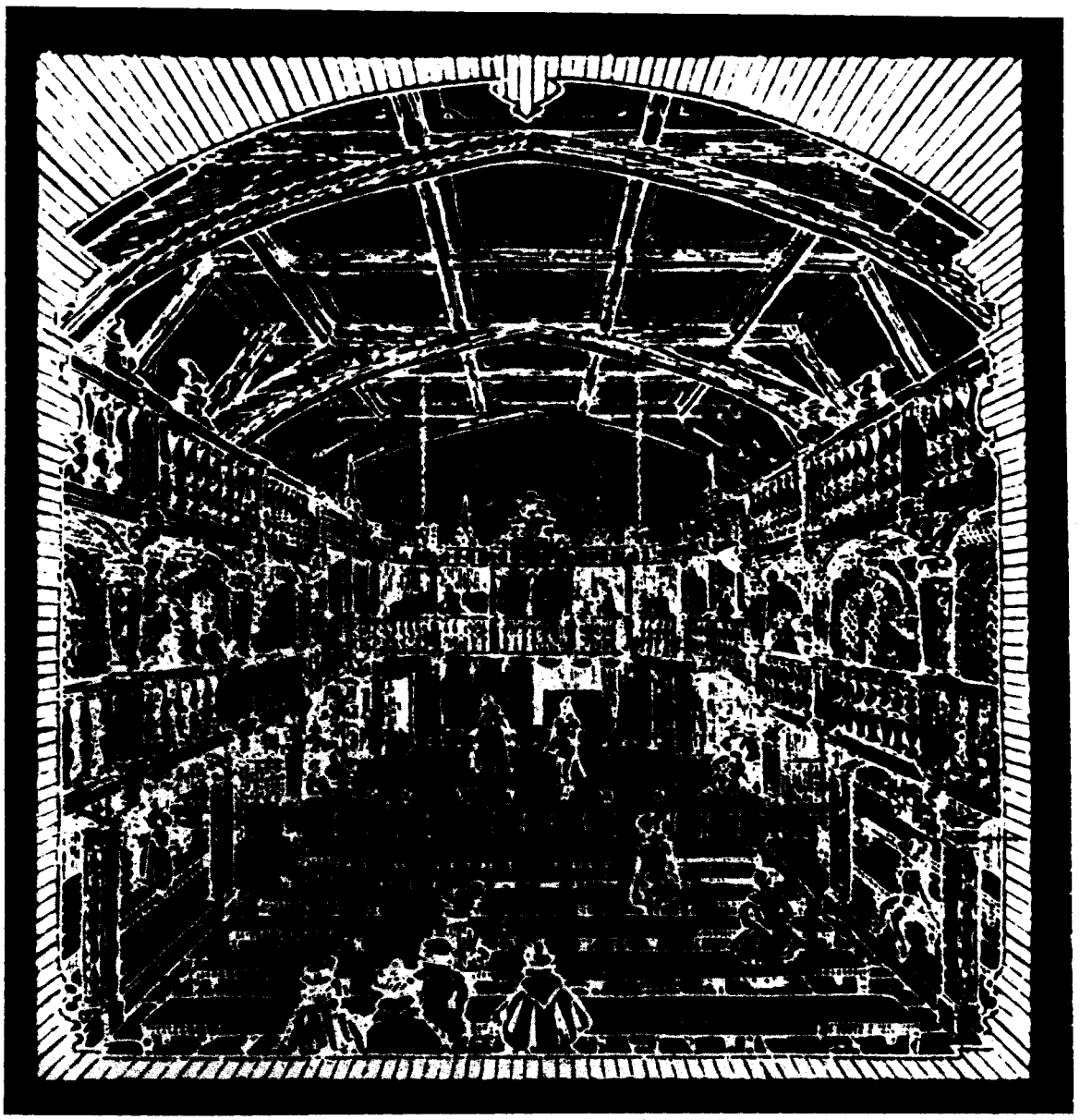
3 Charles William Wallace, "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars", Century Magazine LXXX (September, 1910), 748.

4 J. Isaacs, Production and Stage Management at the Blackfriars Theatre (London, 1933), p. 5. ". . . there is no such sharp division between public and private theatre practice as is usually assumed."

5 Alfred Harbage, op. cit., p. 27.

6 Armstrong, p. 5.



Reconstruction of the Second Blackfriars Theatre
Drawn by J. H. Farrar (1921)

in William A. Armstrong, "Elizabethan Private Theatres Facts and Problems", The Society for Theatre Research Pamphlet Series, VI (1957-58), 1.

which leads me to a point of departure with those critics who assume that conventions and techniques of the two theatres were identical. If there is any accuracy in the Farrar Blackfriars sketch (and there appears to be no reason to doubt its accuracy)[7] a significant stage characteristic becomes apparent.

The elevated stage in Blackfriars extended across the width of the room and although there was no ceiling to the stage other than the ceiling of the room itself, the stage was flanked by either private boxes or stools seating the half-crown patrons. With the stage backed up to one end of the room (to allow for as much patron seating area as possible) the actor was, in fact, performing "through" a fourth wall of a picture-frame stage. The actor's prosce-

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7 Although it is an interior perspective sketch, it agrees in accuracy with the interior plan of Blackfriars proposed by Charles William Wallace, op. cit., p. 746. In reproducing the Farrar sketch in his Elizabethan Private Theatres Facts and Problems, William Armstrong states in a footnote, "a reproduction of this picture appeared in The Times, 21 November, 1921, (p. 5.), where it is attributed to Mr. G. Topham Forrest. It was again reproduced and ascribed to Forrest by K. Macgowan and W. Melnitz in The Living Stage (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1955, p. 174). I owe my knowledge of Mr. J. H. Farrar's responsibility for it to the kindness of Dr. Richard Southern, who discussed the matter with Mr. Farrar and members of the Architects Department of the London County Council. This reconstruction has acquired some currency for it has also been reproduced by Messrs. R. Mander and J. Mitchenson in A Picture History of the British Theatre (London, 1957, p. 14). There is a model of the Blackfriars Theatre based upon this drawing in the Memorial Theatre Art Gallery at Stratford-upon-Avon."

nium stage was constituted, first of all, at the bottom by the down-stage edge of the platform; he was flanked on either side by private boxes (and the Farrar sketch on p. 28 suggests that these boxes or sitting areas were screened off); while the top of his proscenium constituted the dark area of the room ceiling (although the stage area was probably lighted overhead by chandeliers, there was not any reason to light the ceiling as well). It would also be most practicable to keep the stage chandeliers suspended at as low a height as possible in order to gain maximum illumination on the stage.

Furthermore, since there were apparently no house lights with which to contend,[8] the spectator sat in a darkened auditorium looking at an illuminated stage. And if there were candle footlights (the sketch suggests a row of candles across the entire front of the stage) a more pronounced division between actor and audience was effected--a division which did not exist in the open-air Globe where all shared the natural daytime lighting.

Although I do not propose to discuss the performing characteristics of an open stage and a proscenium stage, one obvious result of the picture-frame notion I suggest is pertinent to this essay: there is an immediate loss

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8 Isaacs, p. 10. "The lighting presented few difficulties. There were no 'house lights', sufficient light coming from the windows to enable the audience to find their places."

of some of the intimacy an actor enjoys with his audience, the moment those in the audience become mere spectators rather than participants in the stage activity. M. M. Reese discusses the intense audience-actor rapport achieved by the Elizabethan open stage:

> An actor standing at the front of the platform stood at the exact centre of the tiny octagon, with spectators at his feet, on either side of him, and looking down at him from three sides of the building . . . . The actor stood among the audience, could see their faces, watch their changing expressions, nudge them, speak to them, include them in the action . . . and when the climax was reached . . . it ended, as artistically it should, with a gradual lowering of the tension and quietness at the close. This intense intimacy, possible only when actors and audience stand in the same steady light, was the outstanding difference between the Elizabethan theatre and our own.[9]

The existence of a picture-frame stage need not be a physical, structural framework: insofar as the actor and the audience are concerned, it is essentially a psychological barrier. Pronounced shadows surrounding a stage would be sufficient to create this fourth-wall psychological barrier.

There are further considerations which may add validity to my proposal of the Blackfriars' picture-frame stage notion. We are aware that prior to the beginning of the King's Company's lease at Blackfriars the court theatre

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9 Reese, pp. 152-53.

> by 1605, had been equipped with a proscenium arch derived from station research and experiment and, by 1611, with settings that could be changed in the course of the dramatic action to accord with changes of place.[10]

It is hardly possible, I believe, that the King's Men would be unaware of the effectiveness of a proscenium-arched picture-framed stage. The proclivity of the stage veteran is towards examination of and experimentation with new methods of dramaturgy. If Inigo Jones and Ben Jonson had been so successful in their court productions, I believe it natural for others to have followed their tested and proven examples.

Embarking on a new venture in Blackfriars, why would not the King's Men be tempted to offer something new and different in comparison to the fare they presented at the Globe? There can be little argument that Shakespeare, above all, was a willing dramatic experimenter. His canon attests to his readiness to borrow ideas, build on them and eventually, to improve on them. Whether the King's Men chose to borrow Jones' proscenium-stage practice or not is conjecture, of course, but I would be reluctant to state flatly that they gave no consideration to the possibility of experimenting with a new performance style.

The extent to which the rear inner-stage was used has often been discussed by scholars. But with the

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10 Glynne Wickham, Early English Stages (London, 1963), II, 154.

exception of Richard David[11] and Leslie Hotson,[12] I am unaware of anyone who flatly rejects the inner-stage as a vital part of Elizabethan theatrical practice. The alternation theory of Elizabethan staging is founded on extended use of the inner stage.[13] But whether entire scenes were staged within the inner recess or whether the recess was used for a discovery "within", with action flowing out onto the stage proper, its existence is readily acknowledged.[14] An examination of the inner

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11 Richard David, "Shakespeare And The Players," Proc Br Acad XLVII (1961), 139. "It is quite clear that that famous 'inner-stage', pictured in every textbook (but not unfortunately in any contemporary illustration) did not exist; and its companion, the balcony, is almost equally discredited, at least in any form remotely like that in which we have been used to conceive it."

12 Leslie Hotson, "Shakespeare's Arena," Sewanee Review LXI (1953), 349. ". . . yet we are asked to believe that the actor-poet who could give birth to such scenes [Antony at the monument, Desdemona's bed scene, Romeo and Juliet in the tomb] would stand by and let them be suffocated in alcoves set behind twenty-seven and a half feet of open-air stage! . . . . To pigeonhole them as remotely from the spectator as possible verges on theatrical imbecility."

13 Ashley Thorndike, Shakespeare's Theatre (New York, 1928), p. 121. "Cymbeline, one of the first plays written by Shakespeare for the Blackfriars illustrates this form of alternation (inner and outer stages) and several other uses of the inner stage."

14 Ibid., pp. 128-29. The ". . . development in the employment of the inner stage seems to be connected with the growing importance of the private theatres. With their greater facilities for lighting, the inner stage must have been given a better display, and with their more fashionable audiences, used to court performances and masques, there must have been a demand for more properties. Moreover, the very fact that the stage

stage, keeping in mind its many uses in Elizabethan-Jacobean drama, reveals that it is but a picture-frame stage. The practice of presenting scenes through a fourth-wall would be an acting experience shared by all the King's Men, and, moreover, it would be an accepted practice by Elizabethan-Jacobean audiences. A brief mental expansion of that miniature picture-frame gives us, of course, a full picture-frame stage.

Stout adherents of the open-platform Shakespearean stage take great issue with such considerations as suggested above. The normal reaction of such adherents is to discount such arguments on the basis that the one who has presented them has not managed to blot out of his mind current stage practices. I appreciate that much of my notion is based upon conjecture, but I must conform to the idea that the stage of the Blackfriars theatre, because of its structure, combined with the conjectural possibilities I have outlined, was in theatrical effect a proscenium stage setting for plays presented in that theatre after the year 1608.

There are critics who do not hesitate to state that

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was now indoors, without a special heaven and without pillars, made it approximate much more closely to the Restoration stage and invited attempts to simulate interiors. What other changes in the arrangement of curtains may have added, we cannot tell; but less projection, and the placement of the proscenium doors on a bias, all seem to me likely to have characterized the private theatres, though they may all have been found in the later public theatres."

those Jacobean dramatists who were hired to write plays for the Blackfriars' productions of the King's Men were those playwrights who catered to popular tastes and initiated the decline of drama from its Elizabethan greatness to its ultimate decadence during the Restoration.[15]

While concurrence with such critics is not necessarily part of this essay, I suggest that one of the contributing factors to the decadence of seventeenth century drama may very well have been the loss of that intimate association between actor and audience which only the open, extended platform of the public playhouse provided. M. M. Reese states,

> Some three years after his company opened the indoor playhouse at Blackfriars, Shakespeare retired from the theatre, but already the new style of playing had scored itself upon his work.[16]

When Reese mentions "the new style of playing", he refers to that poetic drama which "sold its soul for the sake of a handful of mechanical devices."[17] But perhaps his reference could as well include that se-

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15 Reese, p. 164. ". . . whereas Shakespeare is beautifully precise in his scenic effects . . . Marston merely makes a resonant noise, for that is all he needs to do: the twelvepenny hirelings [stage technicians] are doing the rest."

16 Reese, p. 164. (emphasis mine)

17 Ibid.

paration of actor from his audience which I have suggested was a possibility in Blackfriars presentations.

## Lighting in the Blackfriars Theatre

There is little recorded evidence that the King's Men in their earlier Blackfriars plays used dramatic lighting effects although the traditional signal to mark the beginning of a performance, "apart from music, was the lighting of stage candles."[18] We are aware, however, of the general-illumination instruments of lighting as features of Blackfriars from the Farrar sketch and we can only assume that these same features existed when the King's Men started their professional performances in that theatre. An examination of the sketch indicates that general lighting for the theatre was provided by chandeliers suspended over the stage,[19] a row of footlights across the front edge of the stage[20]

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18 Isaacs, p. 10. Professor Isaacs in preparing his survey of production procedures at the Blackfriars Theatre examined nearly 150 plays, of which seventy were " . . . unquestionably performed at the Blackfriars, and the remainder are both public and private plays of illustrative interest." The evidence for his conclusions is to be found"in inductions or acted prologues, in literary stage directions, in manuscript prompt copies, and in plays printed from prompt copies." p. 5.

19 Ibid. Isaacs states that the chandeliers were lowered for trimming between acts.

20 Armstrong, p. 12. ". . . but there is no record of the use of footlights in English public or private theatres before the Restoration."

and there is evidence that sconces for torches were attached to the rear walls of the private stages.[21]

All these units, of course, constituted general illumination and we can only guess at where any further attempts at lighting would have been made. Further, since there were no house lights, and realizing the possibility that the windows could have been covered off, we assume that the lighting on the stage was sufficient for the action to be seen properly.

However, at what point does general illumination end and dramatic lighting begin on a stage illuminated by candles? Soft, flickering candle-light has suggestive dramatic connotations at any time, even though we are aware that the Blackfriars personnel used candles from necessity. The dramatic overtones of such light and shadows cast over a play performance that is intentionally planned to arouse emotions in an audience cannot be ignored. For example, when Ferdinand and Miranda are "discovered" at their game of chess (The Tempest, V. i) by Prospero they are presumably within the inner stage. In such a small area (and in the instance, some scenic effects to represent the inner stage as Prospero's cave may have been made) any general attempt to illuminate the young couple could very well have had a profoundly dramatic effect. And, indeed, since the "discovery" involves the revealing

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21 Armstrong, p. 13.

of a lost son to his father, the scene could very well have been dressed up to become the theatrical "vision" Alonso believes it to be:

> If this prove
> A vision of the island, one dear son
> Shall I twice lose.
>
> (V. i. 175-7)

Shakespeare and his company would have been well aware of possible effects to be achieved by specific placement of lighting units both from their experiences with their own court productions and from the masque productions of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones.

Instances where lighting effects could be used to excellent advantage are many in Shakespeare's later plays (The Hermione statue scene in The Winter's Tale V. iii for example) and to suggest that the King's Men would fail to take advantage of one of the most inherent dramatic features of the private playhouses would be to deny them their due as a thoroughly professional performing troupe.

## Scenery at Blackfriars

There is an additional result which the availability of artificial lighting units might have had in the Blackfriars productions of the King's Men. They may have been encouraged to attempt serious scene painting effects. Once again, they would have been able to draw upon the scenic successes enjoyed by Inigo Jones as well as upon

the experiences of their own performances at court. Painted scenery in stark daylight looks just that--stark, painted scenery, and the Globe players may very well have been discouraged from using scenery in their open-air productions.[22] But, in the reflection of indoor artificial lighting, skilfully-painted scenery takes on a heightened, contributing, dramatic function of its own.

In a study of conditions in the Blackfriars theatre, one of the more difficult features to determine with any certainty is whether the practices in the use of scenery and scenic devices differed in that theatre from that of the public theatre.[23] While many scenic effects were common to both theatres and plays were generally interchangeable from one theatre to another in terms of scenic fulfilment,[24] the interior, artificially-lighted stage

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22 Harley Granville-Barker, "Chapters XX. and XXI. of The Elizabethan Stage," RES I (January, 1925), p. 69. ". . . backgrounds can be made effective indoors by a constant artificial light; outdoors they are more trouble than they are worth."

23 Chambers, III, 130. "It is, I think, a principal defect of many investigations into Jacobean staging, that the identity of the devices employed in the so-called 'public' and 'private' houses has been too hastily assumed, and a uniform hypothesis built up upon material taken indifferently from both sources, without regard to the logical possibility of the considerable divergences to which varying conditions of structure and of tradition may have given rise."

24 For example, Marston's Malcontent had been written for and performed by the Blackfriars' children at the private theatre in 1604. The "Induction" to the play indicates that only slight changes were made for performance of the play by the King's Men at the Globe.

of the Blackfriars was certainly more conducive to greater and more refined scenic usage: As well, the strong masque element of plays performed at the Blackfriars indicated a greater need of scenic devices.

The court masques of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, which were occasionally imitated by Blackfriars playwrights[25] were highly elaborate in design, costly to produce,[26] and involved a multitude of scenic materials and devices.

One of the characteristics of these masques was the

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25 C. J. Sisson, "The Theatres and Companies," A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 31. Professor Sissons points out the effect of the scenic and architectural displays of the court masques of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, ". . . with the reign of James came the vogue of the court masque, which joined the dance and music with symbolic costume and also with increasingly elaborate scenic and architectural display, and machines designed by such men as Inigo Jones. . . . Such displays had their inevitable repercussion on the professional stage, and could best be emulated in the 'private' houses, in enclosed rooms and by artificial light."

26 G. B. Harrison, "The National Background", A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 182. "Court entertainments and pageants were magnificently extravagant. At Christmas 1604 £3000 was expended on the Queen's masque." At current exchange this £3000 expenditure would approximate $9000. However, when the purchasing value of money is taken into consideration, the "real" cost to the court of James of such a pageant could be estimated at approximately $120,000. Also see G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare The Complete Works (New York, 1948), p. 1648. "A general idea of the comparative standards of prices is possible if the Elizabethan pound is taken as roughly equivalent in modern times to $40, the shilling as worth $2, and a penny as 16 cents."

achievement of several scene changes, often to the dazzlement of the audience. Allardyce Nicoll describes three Jonson masques which used a scene turning machine based on the Greek periaktoi idea of three-sided, painted scenic units which revolved on axes.[27] The masques, Hymenaei, Masque of Blackness, and the Masque of Beauty, were presented at Whitehall and at Oxford (between 1605 and 1607) and are stated to have influenced Shakespeare's The Tempest.[28] Inigo Jones had become aware of the Greek scenic device "from a study of Vitruvius, and no doubt from practical experiences of the Italian stage"[29] and, supposedly, was the first in England to incorporate its usage in the court theatre of James.

However, there is some evidence provided by William E. Miller[30] that periaktoi might have been stock scenic items in the old Blackfriars and were in regular use by the children performing there. Dr. Miller notes that a marginal comment attached by Abraham Fleming to his translation of Vergil's Georgics (1589) referred to periaktoi as stage machinery in use at the old Blackfriars. Because

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27 See Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage (New York, 1938), pp. 63-68.

28 "Introduction" to The Tempest, in The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare, Frank Kermode ed. (London, 1954), p. lxxii.

29 Nicoll, p. 63

30 "Periaktoi in the old Blackfriars", MLN LXXIV (1959), 1-3

some issue[31] has been taken with his suggestion, Dr. Miller recently reaffirmed his original assertion, "I conclude that Inigo Jones was not the first in England to make use of periaktoi, and that in fact the old Blackfriars theater was furnished with one or more of them."[32]

If Dr. Miller's assumption is correct, then the practice of using painted scenic units in a private theatre would have been known to the Burbages, certainly, when the elder Burbage purchased the Blackfriars property for the purpose of rebuilding a theatre on the site. Whether the practice was carried on following the 1596 Blackfriars purchase cannot be easily determined, however strong the probability may seem. But in the light of the scenic demands of masque presentations and the confirmed usage of such scenery as periaktoi in the court theatre in 1605, the probability strengthens: particularly so since the use of such units is consistent with the earlier-expressed notion in this essay that in theatrical effect the stage of the Second Blackfriars was a proscenium-arched stage. Other scenic practices of the boys' company of the old Blackfriars could, as well, have been carried over into the new Blackfriars building, although

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31 Leslie Hotson, Shakespeare's Wooden O (New York, 1950), p. 156.

32 "Periaktoi: Around Again", SQ XV (Winter, 1964), 65.

firm evidence is lacking. It is only possible to suggest that the boys who took up activities in the new Blackfriars following Burbage's remodelling "revived the methods of staging with which their predecessors had been familiar during the hey-dey of the court drama under Lyly."[33] Such earlier childrens' staging styles were similar to the elaborateness of court productions in the court theatres of the early Tudors and later in the court of Elizabeth.[34]

## Costuming

If there was any noteworthy distinction in the costuming traditions between the public and private Shakespearean theatres it would have to be determined on the basis of what influence courtly performing traditions made on those Blackfriars plays which attempted to emulate court masques. The wardrobe of the Blackfriars would quite naturally include items of fanciful costuming intended for masque presentations on the candle-lit stage, where, as at court, the costumes "worn in these masques are to be viewed in the light of a thousand candles, the candlelight itself often-times determining the choice of this shade or that, and always demanding a rich show of

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33 Chambers, III, 152.

34 See Thorndike, pp. 144-48.

spangles to glitter in their reflected rays".[35] Other than such items of dress, which may have been borrowed occasionally from the court theatre,[36] contemporary apparel fulfilled the basic costuming needs for Shakespeare's actors. If the scenic practices of the old Blackfriars were carried over into the Second Blackfriars via the children's company performing there after 1600, then it is probable that the wardrobe would have included some items not to be found in the public theatre. Supplemental costuming elaborateness and colour for pageantry or for particular character delineation was as much a part of Globe practice as it was of Blackfriars. When she discusses the costuming of some of Shakespeare's comedies, Bernice Freeman indicates that, ". . . just what the actual practice in the matter of costuming was is not fully understood." And then her summary of that "actual practice" is quite apt, I consider, when she concludes, "It is quite safe to say, however, that it was neither constant, nor consistant."[37]

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35 Nicoll, p. 156.

36 Thorndike, p. 195. The uncertainty of any costuming tradition in the private theatres is pointed out by Professor Thorndike, "The borrowings from the court of costumes, properties, machinery, and decorations are more difficult to trace. . . . We may suppose, however . . . that occasionally properties and costumes used at court may have found their way to the Blackfriars or the Cockpit."

37 "The Costuming of Love's Labour's Lost, Twelfth Night, and The Tempest", The Shakespeare Association Bulletin XI (1936), 94.

## Acting Style in Blackfriars

The smaller, indoor theatre implied limitations upon the actors which the members of the King's Men hitherto would not have experienced, except, perhaps, at court performances. Significance of such limitations immediately would have suggested to the King's Men needed changes in the actors' performances, both vocally and in stage movement, to suit the smaller theatre. More than ever before, Hamlet's advice to the players[38] would be meaningful to the King's Men in their new theatre: The "rant and declamation"[39] of the public theatre would, of necessity, need to be modified. Of Richard III, for example, Dr. G. B. Harrison writes,

> On the stage it is effective in a melodramatic way; It demands extravagant acting and a certain lack of sophistication in the audience. For its own times it was a popular success, and Burbage's acting of the part of Richard was much admired. Indeed his rendering of Richard's last speech--'A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!--was almost as much quoted and parodied as some of

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38 "Oh, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings." (Hamlet, III.ii.8-11)

39 Sisson, p. 20. Professor Sisson discusses the mutual influence exerted by the private and public theatres one upon another, "The 'public' theatre must have ensured a more natural and convincing presentation of characters of men . . . . The 'private' theatre, in return, must have toned down the rant and declamation of the 'public' theatre."

the famous lines of Kyd's Spanish Tragedy.[40] Burbage's famous line spoken midst the noisy battle scene of Richard III would have rung in the rafters of the smaller theatre and would have deafened the ears of the audience. It is probable, therefore, that Shakespeare would have realized that such a line spoken for full dramatic effect would be as inappropriate in that smaller theatre as were, perhaps, many lines and scenes which he had written earlier: such scenes of noise and action that had thrilled the crowded Globe. But how equally effective, albeit considerably different in the atmospheric Blackfriars, might be that same Burbage who quietly and with feeling could express Shakespeare's moving, oft-suggested farewell to the theatre:

> Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
> As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
> are melted into air. . . .
> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> is rounded with a sleep:
> (The Tempest, IV. i. 148-50, 156-58)

## Blackfriars' Audience

When the King's Men acquired their new theatre, they acquired, as well, a new audience, "more select than the groundlings of the Globe, rather sophisticated and trained to delight in sensational, romantic plays,

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40 "Introduction" to Richard III in Shakespeare The Complete Works, ed. G. B. Harrison (New York, 1948), p. 225.

such as Beaumont and Fletcher had been lately offering them.[41]

The geographical location of the Blackfriars theatre in London readily illustrates the makeup of this new audience described by Alfred Harbage as a "coterie audience . . . an amalgam of fashionable and academic elements, socially and intellectually self-conscious."[42] The Blackfriars theatre was centrally located in the city, rather than on the periphery as were the public theatres. In the immediate neighbourhood of Blackfriars were the dwellings and meeting places of various classes of citizenry who had the "leisure and the money" [43] to attend performances, lawyers and members of the Inns of court, ladies of the upper class, and the gentry.

The exclusivity of the audience at Blackfriars was dictated, primarily, by the price of admission to the theatre. Whereas public theatre admission prices were established at 1 d., with an additional penny or two for selectivity in seating, Blackfriars' prices ranged from a minimum 6 d. to an extravagantly high 2s. 6 d.[44]

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41 Thomas Marc Parrott, Shakespearean Comedy (New York, 1949), p. 367.

42 Harbage, p. 56.

43 William A. Armstrong "The Audience of the Elizabethan Private Theatres", RES n.s. XXXIX (1959), 236.

44 Harbage, p. 45. A skilled wage earner in London who worked a 12 hour day, earned from 10 d. to 14 d. for his day's work--approximately 1 d. per hour. Admission

It is not quite enough simply to define the Blackfriars patrons. It is important to examine this coterie audience against a background of a changing society following the passing of Elizabeth in 1603. The quick accession of James following Elizabeth's death, the scrambling at court for favours of the new king, the lavish number of knighthoods bestowed in return for bribes,[45] the influx into London of courtiers of James's Scottish court, the degeneration of court life under the dissolute James, a new court mode for extravagant living and a growing prosperity in the city itself--all these resulted in new fashions and new tastes. By 1610 London took on the air of a modern city and "it was becoming sophisticated, worldly and intensely interested in itself."[46]

When he discusses the decadence of the drama, G. R. Hibbard offers the notion that because the dramatists of

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into Blackfriars, on that basis, was worth a half day's work: The top-priced seat, then, was worth two and a half day's work. See W. G. Hoskins, "Provincial Life", Shakespeare Survey XVII (1964) 18. Also see Chapter III, n. 26 (p. 40 above).

45 Dr. Harrison states that the new King's friendship with the Spanish King quickly dispersed any fears in the nation about the continuing wars with Spain. But if the first reactions to James's actions were those of relief, subsequent actions of James caused considerable disgust. In the first year of his reign James bestowed more than nine hundred knighthoods in return for bribes. See G. B. Harrison, "National Background", p. 181.

46 Thorndike, p. 423.

the time chose to cater to the tastes of the coterie the degeneracy of the drama was speeded up after the death of Shakespeare. He states,

> . . . from the time of Shakespeare's death, or possibly even earlier, there were at least two distinct theatre audiences in London, a 'gentlemanly' audience which frequented the private houses, and a 'vulgar' audience, which preferred the public theatres.[47]

I believe that the distinction between the two audiences had been drawn considerably earlier than the time of Shakespeare's death. The old Blackfriars housing boy chorister companies was itself a distinctive theatre and by modern standards could, I suppose, be labelled an experimental theatre: The emphasis was on music (orchestrated and choral) as an integrated production element and on plays based on romantic-classical themes. The audience to such performances was not great in number and consisted chiefly of courtly, aristocratic personages. Elizabeth herself is reported to have attended a performance of Lyly's Alexander and Campaspe at Blackfriars in 1584.[48] Meanwhile, the public theatres were catering on a broad basis, to all the citizenry of London.

This distinction of a private theatre audience and

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47 "The Tragedies of Thomas Middleton and the Decadence of the Drama", Renaissance and Modern Studies I (1957), 36.

48 J. Q. Adams, Shakespearean Playhouses (Gloucester, Mass., (1917) 1960, p. 109.

a public theatre audience continued even when the Childrens' Companies carried on their performances in the Second Blackfriars. Estimates of numbers of theatre-goers in London "in the year of Hamlet"[49] indicate that eighteen to twenty-four thousand spectators a week visited the public theatres (Globe, Fortune, Boar's Head, Rose) while only six to seven hundred spectators weekly patronized Blackfriars and Paul's boys' performances.[50]

It is worthwhile noting here that the staggering difference in audience figures was not dependent entirely on taste or preferences of the spectators. The public playhouses were greater in number and each accommodated many more persons. As well, the prices of admission in the private theatres, while not as high as in the later King's Men Blackfriars, were still six to twelve times as high as the basic 1 d. charged at the public theatres. What was significant, however, was that shortly after the King's Men assumed their tenancy of Blackfriars and began to perform in repertoire there, they increased the income of that theatre considerably. A statement by Edward

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49 Harbage, p. 47.

50 Ibid., p. 47. Dr. Harbage notes that the nature of his evidence requires methods of estimate so speculative that "no one would wish to defend the exact figures profferred. . . . Nevertheless, even if we doubled the attendance figures given for the boys and halved those for the men . . . the distinction in size between the two clienteles would still remain great enough to retain all its significance."

Kirkham contained in the text of the Chancery suit of Kirkham v. Evans (1612) reveals,

> This replyant [Kirkham] sayth, and the same will averr and proue to this honorable Courte, that duringe such time as the said defendants Hemings and Burbidge and theire Companye contynewed playes and Interludes in the said great Hall in the ffryers, that they gott & as yet dothe, more in one Winter in the said great Hall by a thousand powndes then they were vsed to gett in the Banckside.[51]

One of the obvious answers to this increased success of the King's Men was better management--management by a group of professional theatre men who were able to assess their prospects of financial success properly. And in such assessment they would have been proficient in estimating the potential makeup of their audience and careful in their selection of a repertoire of plays which that audience would pay high prices to view. As well, the greatly increased popularity of the King's Men at the court of James doubtless accounted for a large measure of the Blackfriars success. Such success, while it could have been measured in money, could also be measured in influence. The worldly and sophisticated coterie made the Blackfriars their "resort of fashion" and it was now that the private theatres "determined the plays to be acted at court, and which in general controlled the course of the drama.[52]

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51 Quoted by Frederick Gard Fleay, A Chronicle History of the London Stage, 1559-1642 (London, 1890), p. 248 . (Emphasis mine)

52 Thorndike, p. 421

What was the course of the drama following the King's Men entry into Blackfriars? There seems to be some agreement that, ultimately, the influences of James's court entertainments, the popular and regally demanded masques

> gave a regrettable impetus to the age's movement away from poetic drama, away from the unfolding of plot and character which is drama's eternal business, toward a mongrel sort of entertainment into which music and incident, spectacle and song, poetry and dumb-show were indiscriminately thrust as plums into a pudding. . . . The influence of the indoor theatres, then, was almost wholly bad."[53]

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53 Reese, p. 163

## CHAPTER IV

## THE FINAL PLAYS

Were Shakespeare's final plays (Pericles, Cymbeline, Winter's Tale, The Tempest) indoor plays, and were they written for the King's Men with the Blackfriars in mind? Some evidence suggests that they were. The plays, first of all, demonstrate similarities which cause them to form a distinct group and they "represent a shift in technique and a change of tone in Shakespeare's art."[1] The plays are often called Romances[2] because they deal with themes of love and adventure; they contain songs and dances that are joyous and carefree and songs that touch the heart with pathos; they end happily, on reconciliatory notes of families becoming reunited, lovers becoming betrothed, friendships regained, and peace restored. Yet, at the same time, Romance is a misnomer for the plays, because, before reconciliations are achieved, the plays touch on pain, suffering, incest, evil, tragedy, and death. And, as they occasionally include powerful dramatic motivations so do they approach sheer melodrama in

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1 Thomas Marc Parrott, Shakespearean Comedy (New York, 1949), p. 366.

2 In the Folio of 1623, Cymbeline is entitled The Tragedie of Cymbeline.

resolution. Their similarity in tone and themes, and dramatic resolutions cause the plays to be named Tragicomedies and they constitute the fourth 'phase' of Shakespeare's writing career.

With such characteristics, the plays, as a group, fit readily into the Jacobean private theatre repertoire. From an examination of seventy plays known to have been Blackfriars plays, presented in that theatre by the King's Men from 1608 to 1642, the type division of plays was: Comedy, thirty plays; Tragicomedy, twenty-three plays; Tragedy, fifteen plays; Pastoral and History, one play each.[3] Categorically, then, Shakespeare's last plays are consistent with the tradition which was established by the King's Men during their tenure of the indoor theatre. Alfred Harbage, by compiling a list of all plays known to have been performed in indoor theatres between 1560 and 1613, shows that eighty-five percent of the plays were comedies and fifteen percent tragedies.[4] If Shakespeare intended his plays for Blackfriars he did, at least, write the type of plays which the average playgoer at Blackfriars could expect to see when he visited

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3 John McCabe, A Study of the Blackfriars Theatre 1608-1642," an unpublished Ph. D. dissertation at the University of Birmingham, 1954, p. 276.

4 Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (New York, 1952), pp. 85-86. ". . . no histories," Professor Harbage concludes, "so far as we know ever appeared in the coterie theatre. . . . The one repertory addresses itself to the interests of a community, the other to the preoccupation of a clique."

that theatre.

From his examination of the King's Men repertoire, John McCabe has demonstrated that the typical Blackfriars play was

> . . . a type of non-physical, amoral drama, usually treating of love in its manifold aspects, frequently reverting to the sexually sensational, and almost always containing the elements of music, costume and disguise.[5]

While Shakespeare's late plays fit into this definition in that they contain the characteristic elements outlined, such conformity to the definition is hardly sufficient to categorize the plays as Blackfriars plays, or that Shakespeare as a dramatist was influenced by the changed theatrical environment of Blackfriars: further examination of the late plays is needed.[6]

It may be argued that Shakespeare was influenced by the Blackfriars theatre in his final writing phase since, with the possible exception of Pericles, the plays were written after the Summer of 1608 agreement made by the King's Men. But, at best, such an argument in itself could suggest only that Shakespeare had both the Globe and Blackfriars in mind and that he was concerned about his company's repertoires for both theatres.

Pericles was written and staged some time between

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5 McCabe, p. 295.

6 To some extent, stage directions offer firm clues to staging techniques. Where stage directions are cited in this essay, those used are of the texts rather than those supplied by editors.

1606 and 1608[7] and is known to have been performed before the French and Venetian ambassadors in 1607 or early in 1608.[8] The First Quarto of Pericles (1609) refers to performances of the play, "as it hath been divers and sundry times acted by his Maiesties Seruants, at the Globe on the Banck-side."[9]

Of Cymbeline,[10] Professor Chambers concludes that a date of production "in 1609-10 would fit the evidence of metre and style."[11] Initial performance dates of the

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7 "Introduction" to Pericles, The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare, F. D. Hoeniger ed. (London, 1963), p. lxvi. All passages from the play in this essay are from this edition, as are any critical comments by F. D. Hoeniger. The inclusive dates, Professor Hoeniger points out, can be stated "with some conviction," and the later limit of 1608 is decided by three factors: the Stationer's Register entry for the play on 20 May 1608; the appearance in that year of Wilkin's novel, which "claims to be a report of the play, and uses Shakespeare's names for the characters"; and a contemporary reference to a performance by the Venetian ambassador to England from 5 January 1606 to 23 November 1608.

8 See Venetian State Papers (Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English affairs, existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in other Libraries of North Italy), X.310 and xi 195. Edited by R. Brown, H. F. Brown, and A. B. Hinds. 23 vols., 1864-1921. Referred to in E. K. Chambers William Shakespeare (Oxford, 1930), II, 335.

9 From the Q1. description of the play contained in Chambers, I, 518.

10 Cymbeline, The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare, J. M. Nosworthy ed. (London, 1955). All passages from the play in this essay are from this edition as are any critical comments by J. M. Nosworthy.

11 Chambers, I, 485.

play are not recorded although Simon Forman saw a performance of Cymbeline "probably between 20 and 30 April 1611."[12]

A date of early in 1611 has been given to the initial performance of The Winter's Tale[13] ". . . by the probability that the bear of iii, 3, and the dance of satyrs at lv, 4, 352, were both inspired by those in Jonson's mask of Oberon on 1 January 1611."[14] The place of performance is established, once again, from a description by Dr. Simon Forman. He notes that he had seen the play at the Globe on Wednesday, 15 May 1611.[15]

The Tempest[16] is recorded as having been performed in the Banqueting House at Whitehall by the King's Men on 1 November 1611.[17]

In the fact of such records which do not specify Blackfriars performing dates, can there be any purpose

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12 Chambers, 1, 485. Chambers cites Forman's description of the performance of Cymbeline from Forman's Booke of Plaies (Bodl. Ashm. MS. 208, ff. 200-13).

13 The Winter's Tale, The Arden Edition of the Plays of William Shakespeare, J. H. P. Pafford ed. (London, 1963). All passages from the play in this essay are from this edition as are any critical comments by J. H. P. Pafford.

14 Chambers, I, 489.

15 Forman, Plaies, quoted in Chambers II, 340.

16 The Tempest, The Arden Edition of the Plays of William Shakespeare, Frank Kermode ed. (London, 1962). All passages from the play in this essay are from this edition as are any critical comments by Frank Kermode.

17 From Revels Account, quoted by Chambers, II, 342.

to further discussion which attempts to place these plays against a background of the indoor theatre of Blackfriars? I believe there can be since the above-mentioned performance dates and sites are not so restrictive that they would eliminate any possibility of early Blackfriars productions of the plays.

For example, the Globe performance dates of Pericles (immediately before 28 July, 1608), Cymbeline (before September, 1611), and The Winter's Tale (15 May, 1611) are those times when the King's Men usually performed at their outdoor theatre. The dates mentioned for Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale do not preclude Blackfriars performances during the Winter seasons of 1610-11 or 1611-12. Pericles could not have had a Blackfriars performance earlier than the winter of 1608-09 since the Blackfriars lease was not effected until August, 1608.

As well, for a company performing in repertoire at the Blackfriars, a command performance of one of their plays does not eliminate the play from that season's presentations. Indeed, the 1 November, 1611 indoor Whitehall performance of The Tempest could very well have followed its normally-scheduled performance at Blackfriars that same day!

The outdoor performances of these plays are wholly appropriate to their design, and for Shakespeare to prepare plays which could serve the King's Men in both their

theatres is highly practical. While I reiterate my earlier statement that insofar as theatrical fulfillment is concerned these plays could be accommodated at both theatres,[18] I hold with the notion that their natural performing environment was in the indoor, candle-lit atmospheric Blackfriars.

There are other considerations which enter into this discussion of Shakespeare's late plays and the Blackfriars theatre. And the possible influences of the Blackfriars performing tradition could have affected Shakespeare in several ways when he began to write his fourth-phase plays. The reputation of the theatre, for example, was one of long standing tradition in musical entertainments. The use of music included an hour's entertainment prior to the play, full inter-act music, preludes to acts, and incidental and atmospheric music.[19] From his examination of the Blackfriars repertoire of the King's Men, Dr. McCabe points out that

> The most striking characteristic of the Blackfriars play from the aspect of stage production is music . . . this element is a pronounced one and any play lacking it is singular.[20]

The four plays at hand reveal extensive use of

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18 See Chapter III, n. 25 (p. 40 above).

19 See J. Isaacs, Production and Stage Management at the Blackfriars Theatre (Oxford, 1933), pp. 10-13

20 McCabe, pp. 273-74.

music in songs, masques and dances, as well as what Professor Isaacs describes as "musical mood painting",[21] and their dependence upon music is more apparent than in any other of Shakespeare's plays.

In Pericles, for example, when Pericles meets Antiochus's daughter we find background music heralding the girl's entry to Antiochus's spoken lines,

> Music!
> Bring in our daughter, clothed like a bride,
> For the embracements even of June himself;
> (I.i. 6-8)

and we find the restorative power of music at work when Cerimon is trying to revive Thaisa,

> The still and woeful music that we have,
> Cause it to sound, beseech you.
> The viol once more; how thou stirr'st, thou block!
> The music there! I pray you, give her air.
> Gentlemen, this queen will live.
> (III.ii. 90-94)

There is only one song in Pericles, by Marina. But while her song fails to rouse Pericles out of his mourning immediately, it is as if the echo of her earlier attempt is heard by him at the moment he recognizes her for his lost daughter,

> I embrace you.
> Give me my robes; I am wild in my beholding.
> O heavens bless my girl! But hark, what music?
> (V. i. 220-22)

> How sure you are my daughter. But what music?
> (V. i. 224)

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21 Isaacs, p. 6. ". . . all the evidence goes to show that the private stages relied very largely on musical mood painting."

Two dances in the play, (the Knights and the Knights and Ladies) in III. ii suggest additional music, but the use of music in the play is evident, and

> . . . the important contribution of music to the play's total effect is not in question. Though Shakespeare was fond of music, nowhere else did he use it as often and as widely except in the great play which Pericles so clearly anticipates, The Tempest. In both we are presented with music and with storms. When the storms subside, music takes over.[22]

Cymbeline contains two songs and a masque. Of Cloten's song, "Hark, Hark, the Lark" (II. iii. 20-26) J. M. Nosworthy states,

> The play has a fairly high proportion of early morning scenes, and the song is one of a number of devices which serve to impress upon the audience that it is now dawn, though it might more fittingly be regarded as a symbol rather than a device.[23]

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22 Hoeniger, pp. lxxviii, lxxix.

23 Cymbeline, p. 221. There seems little purpose in using this song "to impress upon the audience that it is now dawn" when three near-consecutive statements with reference to morning precede the song:

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|---|---|
| Clo. | It's almost morning, is't not? |
| First Lord | Day, my lord. |
| Clo. | I wish this music would come: I am advised to give her music a mornings. (III. iii. 9-12) (Emphasis mine) |

What appears unusual from this scene is that such emphasis is given to indicate daylight. the public, open-air theatrical tradition was that daylight was assumed; the indication of night scenes was necessary by some means. Torches or candles, or costumed night dress, usually with some reiteration by one of the actors of the fact that the scene was taking place at night were some of the normal public playhouse practices. Is it possible that the normal conventions of indicating time of day did not apply in the case of this play?

While "Hark, hark, the Lark" performs mood-setting and scene-setting functions, the music in the masque in V. iv. heightens the solemnity of that scene and provides background for the apparitions. The detailed stage direction reads:

> Solemn music. Enter (as in an apparition) Sicilius Leonatus, father to Posthumus, an old man, attired like a warrior, leading in his hand an ancient matron (his wife, and mother to Posthumus) with music before them. Then, after other music, follow the two young Leonati (brothers to Posthumus) with wounds as they died in the wars. They circle Posthumus round as he lies sleeping. (emphasis mine)

A further instance of the restorative power of music is found in The Winter's Tale in the final scene of the play. It is a moving scene, performed in stillness; a highly dramatic moment charged with tenseness at the prospect of a deceased loved one returning to life,

> Paul. It is required
> You do awake your faith. Then all stand still:
> Or--those that think it is unlawful business
> I am about, let them depart.
> Leon. Proceed:
> No foot shall stir.
> Paul. Music, awake her; strike!
> 'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach.
> (V. iii. 94-99)

and Hermione steps down to approach her husband and takes

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The preceding bed-chamber scene (III.ii) with Imogen and Iachimo, takes place at night ("almost midnight, madam", "Take not away the taper, leave it burning", "the flame o' the taper Bows toward her", "Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning may bare the raven's eye") and is obviously lighted by candlelight. If a new daytime scene follows, also lighted by candlelight, as a normal convention it would be necessary, of course, to indicate a change of time as daylight.

him by the hand.

By all traditional performing standards, this scene is the typical Blackfriars' scene. Its complete theatrical impact is difficult to visualize as being achieved on an open stage in broad daylight. All the resources and scenic atmospheric qualities of the indoor stage are called into play here--the quietness, the lighting, and the music.

Gerald Eades Bentley states that when the King's Men decided to assume their lease on Blackfriars, "the most elementary theatrical foresight demanded in 1608 they prepare new and different plays for a new and different theatre and audience."[24] The evidence that Shakespeare did produce "new and different" plays in Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest, Doctor Bentley adds, "is to be found in the plays themselves."[25] Some of the evidence that Bentley speaks of, I expect, is such a scene as is discussed on the previous page.

With the exception of the Hermione restoration scene, music in The Winter's Tale is confined to IV. iii. and iv.[26] Contained in the two scenes are six songs and two dances

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24 Gerald Eades Bentley, "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars Theatre", Shakespeare Survey I (1948), 49.

25 Ibid., p. 47

26 In a play of 3,074 lines the music and dance elements are contained in 450 consecutive lines. See Pafford, p. 173.

--such abundance and concentration of music which were consistent with the Blackfriars performing tradition.

But, if any of the four plays fitted into the King's Men's Blackfriars' repertoire the play which did so most readily was The Tempest. The play's dependence upon music, songs, and masques is greater than that of any other play of the canon. The play is "impregnated with atmospheric music"[27] and throughout the play the power of music is evident,

> Solemn music [s. d.]
> A solemn air, and the best comforter
> To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
> Now useless, boil'd within thy skull! There stand,
> For you are spell-stopp'd.
> (V. i. 58-61)

And nowhere in the Shakespearean canon is the atmosphere of a whole play so permeated with music as is Prospero's magic island:

> Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs, that giwe delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
> That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
> The clouds methought would open, and show riches
> I cried to dream again.
> (III. ii. 133-41)

To create such an atmosphere in the production of the play, as well as to produce, musically, eight songs, two dances, and the elaborate masques is less easy to imagine being achieved with any degree of artistry in

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27 See Kermode, p. 152

the open-air Globe than in the indoor Blackfriars where the reputation and tradition for musical productions were long standing.

The most detailed and elaborate stage directions in all of Shakespeare appear in these late plays: The Tempest, III. iii.

18. Solemn and strange music; and Prospero on the top (invisible). Enter several strange shapes, bringing in a banquet; and dance about it with gentle actions of salutations; and inviting the King, & c., to eat, they depart.

52. Thunder and lightning. Enter Ariel like a Harpy; claps his wings upon the table; and with a quaint device, the banquet vanishes.

53. He vanishes in thunder; then, to soft music, enter the shapes again and dance, with mocks and mows, and carrying out the table.

Intermingled with songs, the spectacular musical production continues in the scene following:

IV. i. 59. Soft Music. Enter Iris.

72. Juno descends.

75. Enter Ceres.

105. They sing.

133. Enter certain Nymphs.

138. Enter certain Reapers, properly habited: they join with the Nymphs in a graceful dance; towards the end whereof Prospero starts suddenly, and speaks; after which, to a strange, hollow, and confused noise, they heavily vanish.

254. A noise of hunters is heard. Enter divers spirits, in shape of dogs and hounds hunting them Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo about; Prospero and Ariel setting them on.

The fulfillment of such and other musical production requirements would have taxed considerably any theatre's facilities for producing musical entertainments; artistic talent, musical instruments, and their accommodation in the playhouse. And the variety of musical instruments called for in the late plays is unlike that of Shakespeare's earlier plays. In Cymbeline, Cloten's request of the musicians for

> . . . a very excellent good-conceited thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it . . .
> (Cymbeline II. iii. 17-19)

and his further references to "horse-hairs, and calves'-guts" (II. iii. 29) imply music provided by stringed instruments.[28]

Belarius's comment

> My ingenious instrument
> (Hark, Polydore) it sounds; but what occasion
> Hath Cadwal now to give it motion?
> (Cymbeline IV. ii. 186-188)

suggests some extraordinary mechanical instrument the playing of which foretells the death of Imogen

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28 Nosworthy, p. 56 n. 17. J. M. Nosworthy suggests that the good-conceited reference of Cloten's is a tune "full of pleasant conceit of fancy. This would be a fantasia for several instruments, probably the customary consort of viols and recorders."

. . . Since death of my dears't mother
It did not speak before.
(IV. ii. 189-90)

Whether such an instrument, possibly a virginall,[29] was used or not, it could be simulated by an organ or a consort of viols.[30] But the elaborate musical entertainment provided at Blackfriars is evident from a record of the visit to Blackfriars in 1602 by the Duke of Stettin-Pomerania. The record indicates that organs, lutes, pandorins, mandolins, violins and flutes were used in a concert performance for a whole hour prior to the play performance.[31] The musical atmosphere suggested by the internal evidence of the late plays is consistent with the availability of such orchestral instruments. Stage directions from Blackfriars plays[32] bear out the

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29 Nosworthy, p. 134, n. 186.

30 See Edward J. Dent, "Shakespeare and Music," A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 156.

31 See The Diary of the Duke of Stettin-Pomerania, printed in Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (1890), referred to in Joseph Quincy Adams' Shakespearean Playhouses (Gloucester, Mass., 1960), p. 208.

32 Stage directions from Marston's Sophonisba, a play performed in Blackfriars in 1604 reveal that while they include the normal trumpets, cornets and sennetts of battles they indicate instrumental usage unlike that of the public theatre plays:

I. ii. "Chorus with cornets, Organ, and voices,"
"the Cornets and Organs playing loud full musicke for the act intermission ."
IV. i. "Organs Violls and Voices play for this Act,"
"Infernal Musicke plaies softly, whilst Enrictho enters and when she speakes ceaseth,"

use of such instruments, and unquestionably their effectiveness was more pronounced in that theatre than in the public theatre.[33] Although Shakespeare's use of music in his other plays is apparent, it is in these late plays that Shakespeare's musical requirement shows greater consistency with the musical traditions and capabilities of the Blackfriars theatre than with the Globe theatre.

While the public theatre plays were not entirely without music, the instrumental emphasis was on hautboys, trumpets, sennetts, cornets, and drums to fill the preponderant need for "alarums," "excursions," "flourishes," "retreats," dances, and pageantry.

Such stage directions are noticeably absent from the late plays, particularly in the Cymbeline battle scenes where such off-stage musical effects were a part of normal practice in the open-air theatres.

In the earlier Shakespearean plays in which military conflict is represented, scarcely a scene entry is made without "flourishes" or "alarums," while in Cymbeline Guiderius makes reference to "the noise . . . around us"

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"A treble Violl and a base lute play softly." The Plays of John Marston, H. Harvey Wood, ed. (London, 1938). I.

33 F. W. Sternfeld, Music in Shakespearean Tragedy (London, 1963), p. 243. "The aristocratic strings were easily audible at the Blackfriars Theatre or in a covered hall, but at the Globe Playhouse their softness constituted an acoustical hazard."

(IV. iv. 1)), those scenes which describe the battle indicate no sound effects:

> Enter Lucius, Iachimo, and the Roman Army at one door: and the Briton Army at another: Leonatus Posthumus following, like a poor soldier. They march over, and go out. They enter again, in skirmish. Iachimo and Posthumus: he vanquisheth and disarmeth Iachimo, and then leaves him.
> (V. ii.)

> The battle continues, the Britons fly, Cymbeline is taken: then enter, to his rescue, Belarius, Guiderlius and Arviragus.
> (V. ii.)

Yet, there is no lack of stage directions to indicate music uses elsewhere in the play.[34]

When he discusses characteristics of the King's Men Blackfriars' repertoire from 1608 to 1642, Dr. McCabe points out that, of seventy plays[35] performed there during that period, the use of the stage directions 'alarum' and 'drums' is confined to five plays, and there is not a single 'excursion' in the entire repertoire.[36] He explains, that such noises are "unlikely to be found in a repertoire which usually depicted the confined world of amorous and courtly intrigue."[37] I suggest, as well, that the use of such actions and sounds, in a small, en-

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34 See page 59 above.

35 These seventy plays are known to have been performed initially by the King's Men in Blackfriars.

36 McCabe, p. 275.

37 Ibid., p. 207.

closed theatre would likely have achieved a deafening rather than a dramatic effect.

The use of inter-act music at the private theatres has been demonstrated:[38] music directions for some Blackfriars plays attest to this practice. In Marston's Sophonisba,[39] a Blackfriars play (1604), the stage direction at the conclusion of act one reads:

> "Cornets and Organs playing loud full musicke for the act,"

at the conclusion of act two and prior to act three:

> "Organs Viols and Voices play for this act,"

prior to act five:

> "A Base Lute and a Treble Violl play for this act."

In that same year (1604), from a Globe performance of Marston's Malcontent[40] (a play written for Blackfriars) we learn that such musical practices were not normal procedure at the Globe. In the "Induction" to

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38 See Isaacs, pp. 12-13. Professor Isaacs from his study of Blackfriars plays points out that there were five kinds of music used regularly in the private theatres:

1. Overture concert
2. Full inter-act music
3. Preludes to acts
4. Incidental music (trumpets, coronets, drums)
5. Atmospheric music (soft, infernal, solemn)

39 Sophonisba, in The Plays of John Marston, H. Harvey Wood, ed. (London, 1938). II.

40 "Induction" to the Malcontent, Ibid., I.

the play, Burbage states that it is necessary

> ". . . to entertain a little more time, and to abridge the not received custom of musicke in our theatre."

Including such inter-act and concert entertainments, it is recorded that some private theatre performances lasted up to four hours and longer, on occasion:[41] The public theatres however, normally maintained their "two hour traffic" tradition of uninterrupted performance.[42]

It follows then, that plays written for the private theatres would have been written in accordance with the interact practice and plays would be divided into acts. That this was so is borne out by Wilfred Thomas Jewkes's study of act divisions of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. At the same time, Jewkes concludes that of seventy-four plays for the adult (public) companies which survive from the period 1591-1607 ". . . not a single one of these is divided [into acts], except five by Jonson."[43] Jonson, we are aware, wrote plays for both the public

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41 McCabe, pp. 233-34.

42 See W. W. Greg, "Act-Divisions in Shakespeare", RES, IV (April, 1928), 157. "The data collected point quite clearly to the fact that, as a general rule, the prompt books of plays performed by children's companies at private theatres were divided into acts, and that the prompt books of plays performed by men's companies at public theatres were not. I see no escape from this conclusion.

43 Wilfred Thomas Jewkes, Act Division in Elizabethan and Jacobean Theatres 1583-1616 (Hamden, Conn., 1958), p. 98

and private theatre companies.

If Jewkes's further conclusion is correct, that the practice of dividing plays into acts was adopted by the public theatres some time after 1607, and that the King's Men playwrights (Shakespeare, Jonson and Fletcher) led this "movement because of their association with Blackfriars"[44] then the influence of the private theatre after 1607, in considerable degree, upon Shakespeare, is apparent.

The absence of act divisions in public theatre plays prior to 1607 has led to a re-examination of the function of the rear-wall facade at the Globe theatre: Richard Hosley questions that a music room existed in the first Globe (1599-1613).[45] He bases his argument on results he gained from a study of thirty extant plays first performed by the Lord Chamberlain-King's Men between the spring of 1599 and the autumn of 1608. In trying to locate the source of music in Globe performances, Hosley

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44 Jewkes, p. 101. Of thirty-six plays normally attributed to Shakespare 20 plays were undivided and the remaining 16 were divided in their first appearance in print. However, the 16 divided plays were printed after 1616 (either Q. or F.). It is impossible to determine, therefore, whether the original play script for theatrical use was divided or not. Contained in this group of 16 plays which were divided into acts at the time of their first printing were Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest. Pericles in the Quarto (1609) is not divided into Acts, although the Gower passages provide natural act divisions within the play.

45 "Was There a Music-Room in Shakespeare's Globe?" Shakespeare Survey, XIII (1960), 117.

reveals that nine of the plays repeatedly refer to music sources as "within", whereas none of the plays calls for music from "above". On that basis, he concludes that there was "probably not a music-room over the stage at the First Globe before 1609."[46]

Hosley does allow, as does Jewkes, for the possibility that the King's Men introduced inter-act music to Globe performances between 1609 and 1613. Hosley suggests the possibility that some modification to the Globe's rear stage facade could have taken place shortly after 1609, modelled after the private theatre functions of the rear stage.[47] Such reasoning is consistent with E. K. Chambers' conclusion that he did not find extensive chamber scenes 'above' in any King's play later than 1609,[48] The implication of these findings by Hosley, coupled with Dr. Chamber's conclusions, is that prior to 1609 the upper chamber at the Globe was used for scene staging, whereas, after that date, the upper chamber was occupied by musicians according to accepted Blackfriars' practice.

Music directions for Blackfriars' performances are consistent in their calling for music from "above" rather

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46 "Was There a Music-Room in Shakespeare's Globe?", Shakespeare Survey, XIII (1960), 118.

47 Ibid., p. 117

48 E. K. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage (Oxford, 1923), III, 155.

than from "within" for both inter-act music and musical production effects and the location of this "above" source at Blackfriars has been firmly established as the balcony above the Blackfriars' inner stage.[49] Although in Shakespeare's late plays, stage directions give no direct indication of music sources, it is evident that the music source would be "above", for the inner stage is in continual use throughout the plays for scene staging. It is particularly noticeable that the inner stage is in use when music is called for in the late plays.

In Pericles, for example, the music in V.i.79, "most heavenly music" (V.i.232), and the "music of the spheres" (V.i.228) are called for in an elaborately-staged scene. The stage direction reads:

> On board Pericles' ship, off Mytiline. A Pavilion on deck, with a curtain before it: Pericles within it, reclined on a couch, unkempt and clad in sackcloth. A barge lies beside the Tyrian vessel.

Reconstruction of the staging of the scene places the Pavilion, quite obviously, within the inner stage.[50]

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49 McCabe, p. 214. Dr. McCabe concludes from his examination of the King's Men repertoire (1608-1642) that

1. The musicians were close to those on stage,
2. The musicians were above,
3. They could hear a dialogue cue to begin music.

50 See Hoeniger, p. 138, n. Scene 1. F. D. Hoeniger places the scene into the inner stage, ". . . earlier

In Cymbeline, as well, the inner stage is in use during scenes which involve music. IV.ii takes place before the cave of Belarius and the action of the scene moves into and out of the inner stage throughout the scene. Music called for in the song IV.ii. 258-281, could then be provided by musicians either "off-stage" or in the normal balcony "above".

The jail scene, IV.iv, which includes the appearance of the apparitions and Jupiter (IV.iv.30-122) is an involved musical scene and would of necessity make use of the inner stage for fulfillment of the complex action.

The songs and dances of IV.iii and iv in The Winter's Tale are unlocated in stage directions, but the Hermione statue scene (V.iii) is obviously staged within the inner stage:

> Paulina draws a curtain, and discovers Hermione standing like a statue. (s.d.V.iii.21)

Four out of the nine scenes in The Tempest are staged using the lower inner stage to represent Prospero's cell. Three of these four scenes involve music for songs, dances, masques, as well as mood music. The location of the orchestra, therefore, would be in the normal "above" alcove.

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reconstructions, which place most of this scene on the upper stage, seem absurd." As well, E. K. Chambers does not agree with suggestions that the upper stage was used in Pericles' shipboard scenes (See The Elizabethan Stage III, 116).

If the preceding examination of the late plays is correct, and the internal evidence within the plays appears to bear out the accuracy of the examination, it follows, then, that these plays were prepared for a stage which offered a music-room elsewhere than in the lower-level inner stage. The Blackfriars theatre had such a stage while the first Globe, apparently, did not.

Hosley[51] discounts earlier evidence[52] that the first Globe featured a third-level music-room "above", on the basis that there is neither external evidence to support this notion, nor were the plays, from which internal evidence is drawn to prove the point, designed for performance at the first Globe.

In summary, then, the following conclusions suggest themselves:

1. First Globe practices up to 1609, approximately, were that the inner stage, on the same level as the main stage, was used for musicians who provided a basic musical production need rather

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51 op. cit., pp. 119-20.

52 See John Cranford Adams, The Globe Playhouse (Harvard, 1942), pp. 299-323. Other theories of Adams have, as well, been questioned. His proposition that the Globe featured a second-level terrace across the entire rear wall of the stage prompted George F. Reynolds to reply, ". . . and when we turn to Adams for specific evidence offered by the plays, it turns out to be meager indeed. . . . Not only does Adams's theory show a fundamental misunderstanding of Elizabethan stage-craft, it seems to indicate a misconception of dramatic illusion in general." ("Was There a 'Tarras' in Shakespeare's Globe", Shakespeare Survey, IV [1951], 97-8.)

than an orchestrated mood-musical requirement.

2. The First Globe stage "above" was normally used as an acting area.

3. The Blackfriars inner stage, on the same level as the main stage, was a primary performing area for actors.

4. The Blackfriars stage "above" served as a music room for musicians who provided musical production effects as well as orchestral mood music and musical entertainments.

5. The possibility exists that some modification to the First Globe may have been made between 1609 and 1613 to include a music room. The Second Globe (1614-1644) did possess a music room.

The four plays at hand, once again, in their staging requirements appear to demonstrate consistency with the facilities and traditions of the Blackfriars theatre rather than with those of the Globe. But facilities and traditions aside, for the moment, the prime evidence which suggests that these four plays were prepared with the Blackfriars in mind is the overall (what one critic has labelled) "indoor disposition,"[53] which these plays exude. Their complete artistic realization can only be

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53 Harley Granville-Barker, "Shakespeare's Dramatic Art." A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1932), p. 67. Granville-Barker emphasizes that the indoor conditions of Blackfriars "doubtless gave a new turn to the technique of play-writing."

imagined in the atmospheric, candle-lit conditions of an indoor theatre; performed before an audience, unaffected by weather conditions, who would appreciate the fineness, the prettiness, the musically atmospheric, and less-robust action of the plays.

# CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

This thesis begins with a statement that this is an attempt to determine the extent of influence, if any, of a changing theatrical environment on Shakespeare when he set about writing his final plays Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest. Although some feeling of affirmative conclusiveness about this influence may exist for me, it is another, more difficult matter to offer confirmed documentation of that influence.

To submit as evidence that Shakespeare wrote under the influence of the Blackfriars theatre because his late plays demonstrate consistency with Blackfriars performing traditions and conventions is valid only to a degree, for it is recalled that Shakespeare wrote these plays, as well, for his company's performances at the Globe theatre. But one fact remains constant and basic to this entire question: When the King's Men assumed tenancy of the Blackfriars theatre they became, for the first time in English theatrical history, an adult group of actors performing in full-time repertoire in an indoor theatre which, in atmosphere, at least, resembled more closely our own theatre than it did its sister theatre, the Bankside Globe.

The conviction remains that the King's Men were will

aware of the tradition which they were establishing and that they set out to become successful in their attempt at year-round repertory performances: Their financial rewards are evidence to some degree of success. But more important, they created a link, I believe, between two distinct theatrical traditions. In their open-air Globe productions they reached the zenith of open-air public performances which were started approximately two hundred and fifty years earlier with those travelling players who performed in their scaffolds in a market square or the village green. And in their new Blackfriars they established a tradition of indoor, commercially-popular performances based upon earlier traditions of their indoor theatre and the court theatres.

Shakespeare and the King's Men also helped to create the link which saw English drama move from the poetic-illusory theatre to the realistic-scenic theatre. In the late plays, Shakespeare demonstrated that a scenic theatre (a theatre which depended upon atmospheric qualities other than that offered by the magic of his words) could be successfully combined with the theatre of the poet-dramatist. It is a matter of history, I believe, that those dramatists who followed or simulated Shakespeare misjudged the value of those dramatic elements which provided Elizabethan-Jacobean drama its greatness in that they sought to emulate those elements which they estimated were significant -- the songs, the music, the spectacular -- unaware,

perhaps, that Shakespeare's use of such elements was a natural flow out of sound dramatic motivation and character conflict and development.

However, in the late plays while there is no evidence of any diminishing of Shakespeare's poetic powers, there are elements which have never before appeared in his plays: There is an excessive use of songs, dances, and masques without apparent dramatic need; theophanies supply dramatic resolutions; dumb shows become spectacular addenda; a brothel-seeking monarch woos and wins the hand of a chaste Princess-heroine; and a loyal servant is chased and devoured by a bear.[1]

Were these concessions to popular demand for spectacle? Were they the result of indiscriminate thrusting of "plums into a pudding", discussed earlier, or the dramatist's selling of his soul for a "handful of devices"? There is no way of knowing, of course, what prompted Shakespeare to write his late plays in that manner in which he did. We may gain some clue, however, if we look at his changed theatrical environment from the Globe to the Blackfriars. For it was the Blackfriars theatre, its

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1 See C. J. Sisson, "The Theatres and Companies", in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1934), p. 31. Professor Sisson emphasizes the influence of the court masque upon Shakespeare, "The later years of Shakespeare's career pointed the way . . . to a theatre in which spectacle began to develop at the expense of drama . . . . Shakespeare's later plays betray the influence of the masque and by their strong masque element show how he and his company catered for the new taste".

geographical location in the heart of the coterie audience to which it catered, and the nature and facilities of the building itself, which allowed greater opportunity for spectacle than did the Globe. The influence of the changed environment from the Globe to Blackfriars I believe is evident in the late plays.

In discussing the influence of the Blackfriars theatre upon Shakespeare I have attempted to discuss the historical background of that theatre, its facilities and conventions. Second, I have attempted to examine some critical analysis of the functioning and operation of the theatre. And, third, I have attempted to discuss the final plays against a background of performing traditions of the theatre. In some cases conjecture has played a large part in these discussions, particularly in my attempts to reconstruct some of the scene staging of the plays. Such conjectural study has been necessary owing to the lack of firm external evidence. It is this same lack of evidence which has caused students of Elizabethan-Jacobean staging techniques to preface their discussions of Shakespeare and the Blackfriars theatre with such antecedents as "possibly", "probably", "likely", and, "it may be", when they discuss any influence that the theatre may have had upon Shakespeare. But in assessing Shakespeare's late plays and the conditions in London during the period 1608-1612, I have attempted to conclude that the Blackfriars theatre was the most dominant influ-

ence of several which caused Shakespeare to attempt a different style of playwriting.

The final plays attest to Shakespeare's changed dramaturgical planning in that they reflect a theatrical attitude which is different from his other plays; that attitude, I believe, was the influence of an indoor performing tradition. In order to illustrate this attitude in this essay, it has been necessary to discuss the mise-en-scène of the late plays in the light of Shakespeare as a professional playwright. And in assessing the staging probabilities of the plays I have attempted to adjudicate these probabilities in the light of the professional theatre of Jacobean London: For that, I believe, was the natural home and environment of Shakespeare. As such, the London professional theatre, I feel convinced, was Shakespeare's ultimate and final influence.

In examining the late plays, I have tried to consider them as existing scripts for play productions and I have attempted to examine the mise-en-scène of such productions in the light of contemporary theatrical conditions. I consider that some further examination of Shakespeare's plays is warranted. Such examination should consider the possibility that some of the other plays are, in fact, modified to suit theatrical playing conditions other than those established by the Globe.[2]

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2 For example, a reference in Timon of Athens

While the purpose of this thesis has been to examine the late plays of Shakespeare in the light of a particular tradition, a deliberate intent has been made to suggest that a greater influence of the indoor Blackfriars theatre is evident than hitherto has been acknowledged.

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1605-1609) to a "marbled mansion" (IV.iii.191) and a similar reference in Cymbeline of "marble pavement" (V.iv.120) have caused speculation that the ceiling of the Blackfriars theatre was simulated marble. The ceiling, or "heavens", of the Globe has been fairly-well established as having a design of the Zodiac. See Irwin Smith, Shakespeare's Globe Playhouse (New York, 1956), p. 155.

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